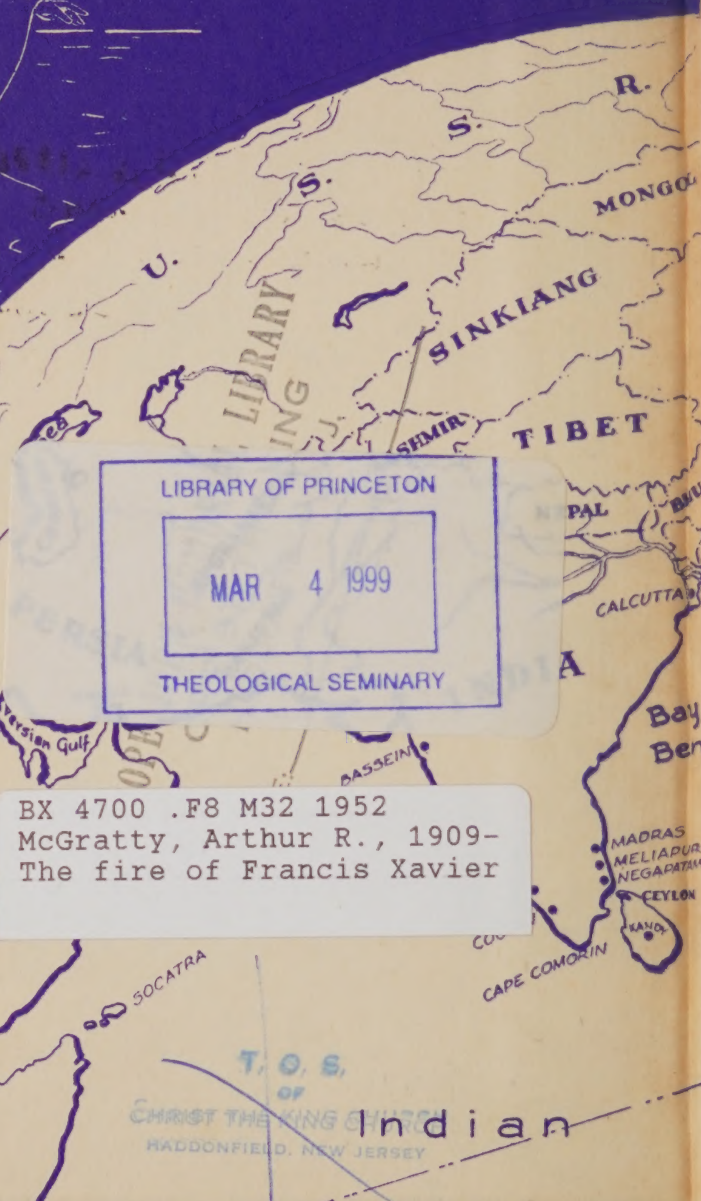
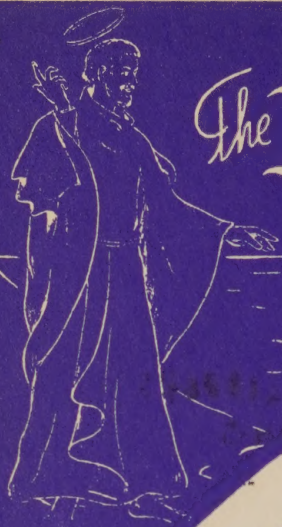


The Mission Field of



LIBRARY OF PRINCETON

MAR 4 1999

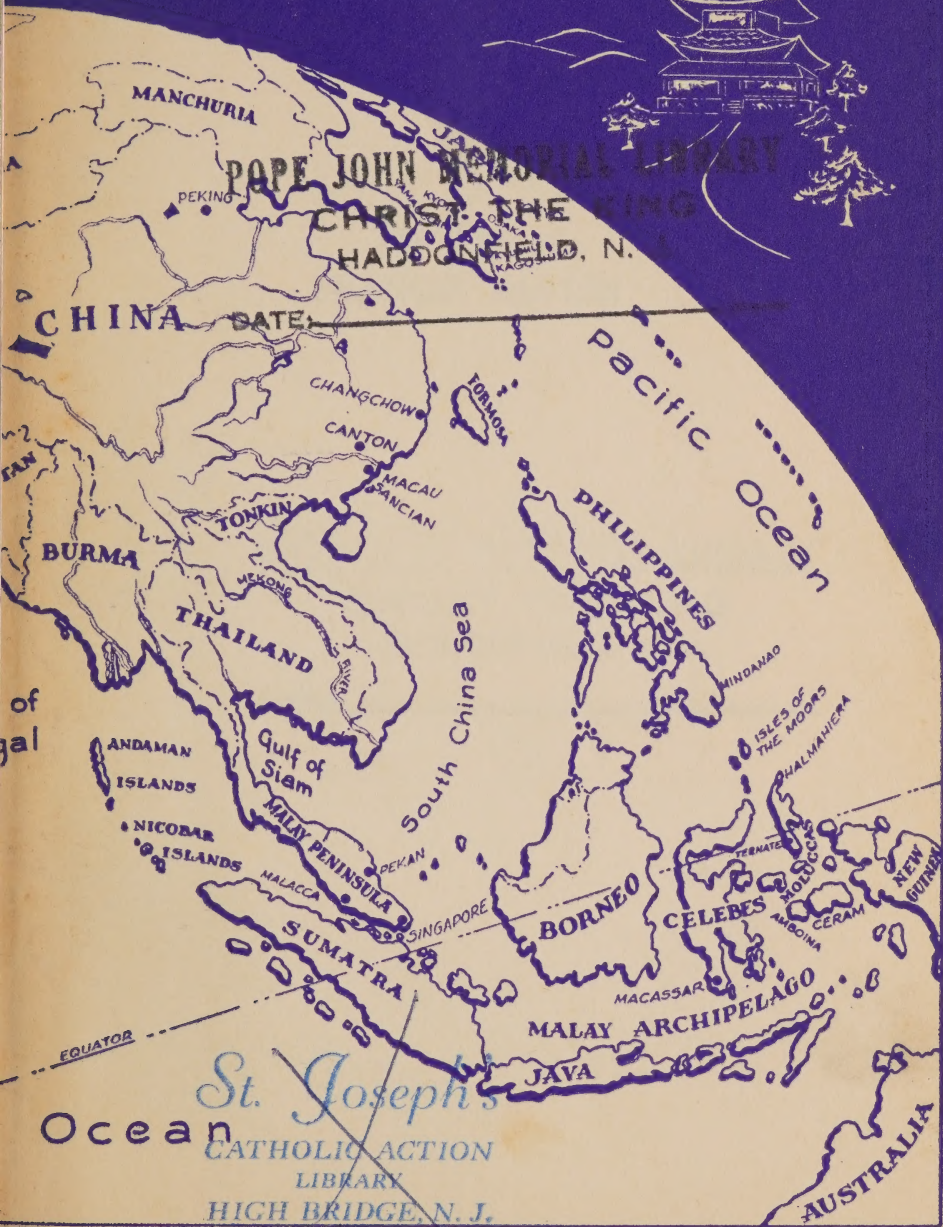
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

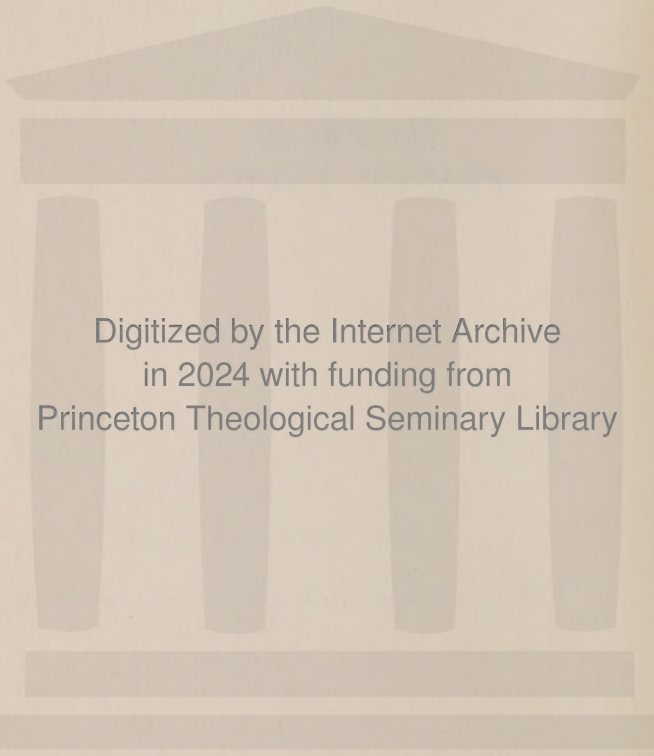
BX 4700 .F8 M32 1952

McGratty, Arthur R., 1909-
The fire of Francis Xavier

T. O. S.
OF
CHRIST THE KING CHURCH
HADDONFIELD, NEW JERSEY

Francis Xavier





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024 with funding from
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

The Fire of FRANCIS XAVIER

· [The Story of an Apostle] ·

~~TOO 3.
CHRIST THE KING CHURCH
HADDONFIELD, NEW JERSEY~~

ARTHUR R. McGRATTY, S.J.

~~St. Joseph's
CATHOLIC ACTION
LIBRARY
HIGH BRIDGE, N. J.~~

THE BRUCE PUBLISHING COMPANY
MILWAUKEE

IMPRIMI POTEST:

John J. McMahon, S.J.
Provincial, New York Province, Society of Jesus

NIHIL OBSTAT:

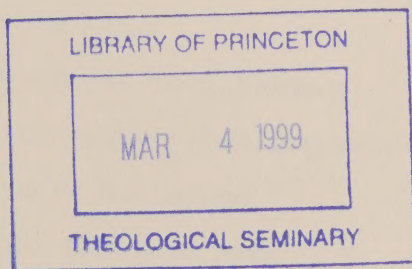
John A. Schulien, S.T.D.
Censor librorum

IMPRIMATUR:

Moyses E. Kiley
Archiepiscopus Milwauchiensis

Die 16a Septembris, 1952

TO
FRANCIS XAVIER
WORLD PATRON
OF THE
APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER



"I have heard our great moulder
of men, Ignatius, declare that Fran-
cis Xavier was, in the beginning,
the stiffest clay he had ever
handled. . . ."

JUAN POLANCO

CONTENTS

1	A SON OF NAVARRE	3
2	A BOY GROWS OLDER	11
3	TO THE CENTER OF LEARNING	22
4	"MY FRIEND, MASTER DON IGNATIUS"	33
5	"FRANCIS, WHAT WILL IT PROFIT YOU . . . ?"	42
6	THE GOOD COMPANIONS	54
7	A RELIGIOUS ORDER IS BORN	64
8	"WE ARE ON THE POINT OF SAILING"	79
9	PASSAGE TO INDIA	93
10	BEGINNINGS IN GOA — 1542	104
11	CAPE COMORIN AND THE PEARL FISHERIES	120
12	"AFTER MANY MEETINGS AND MUCH DIFFICULTY . . ."	136
13	A MAN IS FOUND IN HIS LETTERS	152
14	MALACCA AND THE ISLANDS OF SPICE	164
15	INDIAN PROBLEMS AND A NEW ADVENTURE	181
16	EARLY DAYS IN JAPAN	199
17	"WHAT IS THIS LAW YOU BRING THE JAPANESE?"	212
18	CONCLUSION OF THE JAPANESE MISSION	227
19	THE LAST DAYS IN INDIA	242

20	"THERE IS AN ISLAND CALLED SANCIAN . . ."	259
21	THE FINGER OF GOD	275
	SELECTED READINGS	291
	INDEX	293

The Fire of
FRANCIS XAVIER

[Chapter 1]

A SON OF NAVARRE

April 7, 1506.

It was Tuesday in Holy Week. That it was Tuesday is perhaps worth noting. Scholars in the distant University of Paris could point out that Tuesday, the *dies Martis* of the ancients, was the day dedicated to the pagan god of war. The day of Mars.

A newly assigned guardian angel, undertaking his charge at the castle of Xavier in Upper Navarre, might have added:

"It is fitting, then, that Doña Maria de Azpilcueta's new man-child has come into the world on Tuesday. Especially this Tuesday in the week of Christ's Passion. At the baptismal font he will be named Francisco de Xavier y Jassu. Future generations will recall him as a great soldier of this sixteenth century. Perhaps the greatest. Men's hearts will lift at the retelling of his campaigns for the Christ, in whose sacred week he is born this day."

The man Francis Xavier will achieve eminence in the order of grace. It is an order, a world intangible but no less real for that reason. In the order of nature he was and remained representative of the Navarrese, the Basques. Long years after his birth, the child of Doña Maria will write from the Orient, "These people of India speak the language of Malabar; as for myself, my language remains Basque."

Francis was proud by reason of his blood, his background. The vigorous clarity of the Basque mind, sparkling as did the snow-hooded peaks of the mountainous Basque country, saw first and

without false pride the natural excellence of the racial strain it inherited. The Basques were a proud people, fiery and ardent by nature. Francis Xavier, whose father had held the position of royal councilor, was a child of his race. In the very splendid sibilance of his name, Francisco de Xavier y Jassu, there is something almost suggestive of swashbuckling elegance. This is not said to indicate that fine-sounding names are necessarily an indication of character excellence. (One has but to recall that Satan himself, before his fall, was the Light Bearer, the Morning Star.)

Francis would become, precisely because of himself, one who would lend luster to his family name. As will be seen, his ardent, tempestuous nature was such that the final verdict might well have been otherwise.

It was to his mother that he owed the name Xavier, title of the ancestral home. The castle had belonged to the maternal grandfather. Facing France, it was one of a series of such fortresses, expected to defend the northern border of Spain. The Baztan area, not wholly Spanish, neither Castilian nor Aragonese, reflected its semi-independent condition in a language of its own. Years afterward, Francis reverted in his dying prayers to this "unrecognized language." This was the language of Navarre, learned at his mother's knee some forty and more years before. In this tongue Francis learned his earliest lessons and his prayers.

Austerity was to be his lot in later years. The nature of stern living and rugged surroundings was not a "new thing" when Francis made his missionary journeys. The sun-baked areas adjacent to the Ebro River lay about his youth. From their cool heights the mountain ranges looked down unfeelingly upon the dried and bleached valley of Baztan, wherein stood the fortress of Xavier. The blue shadows descending the hillsides were dissipated in summer by the wan biscuit color of the rolling plains. From any distance the valley appeared breathless, inert, and parched during summer months. In winter, however, the cold Spanish sky lowered punishing storms and swept the countryside with bitter, whining winds. The cold and the snow struck with unfeeling attack, locking the little fortress of Xavier in the lowest temperatures and piling white drifts in the narrow moat and the wide court.

To the Navarrese this customary seesawing of stifling summer and howling winter came as accepted diversity. This was their life. It hardened them and it was the gift of the good God.

The same good God had indeed blessed the union of Doña Maria and Don Juan, Lord of Xavier and Ydocin. Three daughters and two sons were born before Francis' arrival in April of 1506. Religious vocation first touched the family circle through the daughter Madalena. A careful education had provided her with the grace and learning requisite for taking her position as one of Queen Isabella's maids of honor. The records remaining note that Madalena was a girl of great beauty, refinement, and particularly cherished by both Queen and court. Seemingly, however, the court of Castile proved not enough for her ardent nature. Offers of marriage were not wanting but Madalena had determined upon her spouse. She left the court circle and, with parental approval, entered the convent of the Poor Clares at Gandia.

Practically all of Francis' biographers have pointed out that his earliest years were spent in a home where the very atmosphere was distinctly religious. It is not any exaggeration to recognize in the earliest training of the last child of the family a solid foundation from which he would climb to heights of sanctity achieved by few men.

Francis was born into one of the "first families of Navarre." The uncertain origin of the Navarrese has never failed to perplex, if not irritate, inquiring historians. Clearly they were Basques, proud of their ancient "liberties," enjoyed under their own leaders. Let the great kingdoms of France and Spain wrestle with the problem as to which domain they belonged. Their own scholars knew their race owed no racial affinity to any contemporaneous European nation. To them their language was "the oldest in the world," and tradition has maintained that a Basque learns the Chinese and Japanese tongue more speedily than all other "foreign demons." If this be true, the facility must have well served the "foreign demon" who landed, to preach Christ, on the sands of Kagoshima in Japan, on the feast of the Assumption, 1549.

The people of the Basque country were the "unmanageable Cantabrians" of Horace.

"Their Catholic Majesties," as people called Queen Isabella of Castile and her husband Ferdinand of Aragon, welded their respective kingdoms in royal marriage. Nonetheless, the half-independent kingdom of Navarre, lying between Aragon and the Pyrenees, was never to be wholly amalgamated.

Although the question might seem rather academic to us now, it is interesting to note that there arose at the time of Francis' canonization the question: should he be reckoned among the listings of Spanish saints? Again, what should the Latin "Breviary" reading be: *hispanus* or *navarrus*? Only those familiar with the continental Latin character can fully appreciate the delicacy of the dispute. Pride of race can be powerful and fierce. At the time of the Canonization *Bull* of 1623, scarcely a century had passed since Navarre had lost its autonomy. Four fifths belonged to the Spanish crown, the remainder to France. Here, as we would say it, was a how-dy-do. And one of a diplomatic and delicate nature for the Roman authorities.

Advocates of the Spanish and French "claimants" arose to plead the worth of the respective claims. The soil upon which the saint was born had never really been assimilated, although it had been conquered. What of the French? Well, Jassu — pronounced "yatsou" by the Basques — which had been the place of origin of the family, was in *French* Navarre. This, they alleged, truly "gave one to think." A delicate problem, but not an insurmountable one for a Church accustomed to sixteen hundred years of diplomatic procedure. Roman authorities considered the dispute. The Jesuit General, Father John Oliva, taking office forty-one years after the appearance of the Bull of Canonization, refused to take sides.

Those preparing the saint's Office for the Breviary announced, "To indicate Francis Xavier's point of origin, we proceed to point out, in the Breviary, that he was 'born in the Diocese of Pampeluna.' Was it not so?"

In ancestral descent, Doña Maria was connected with the kings of both Navarre and Aragon. She was herself the daughter of a soldier who, like so many soldiers in every age, had "more valor than silver." Doña Maria's mother, Doña Joanna de Aznarez, belonged to one of the oldest Navarrese families. Her parents owned

the *castillo* in the valley of Baztan, defending the frontier on the French side. Part of Doña Maria's dowry was the small and ancient fortress inherited from Duke Eridon Aznar, a long since departed common ancestor of kings of both Navarre and Aragon.

The "noble lineage" of Xavier was not, it should be remembered, an exceptional thing in his native land. Society in the seven Basque provinces was ancient and patriarchal. Almost every family, so the saying went, belonged to a "royal line."

Thus it was that foundation was not lacking for the traditional family and national pride of the provinces. Soule, Lower Navarre, and Labourde were situated on the northern sides of the Pyrenees and on the southwestern shores of France. Those listed as distinctly "Spanish" (Alva, Biscay, and Guipúzcoa) were made part of their kingdom by the kings of Castile in the twelfth century.

The kingdom of Navarre alone escaped annexation.

Pampeluna (today, Pamplona) was established as capital of the kingdom by Sancho Garcia, its first true king. Gone were the days of devastation by marauding Visigoths, Moors, and Franks. Ahead lay the splendid thirteenth-century victory of Sancho the Strong over the Caliph En Nasr at Navas de Tolosa. As a result of the victory, northern Spain shook off for good the yoke of the infidel. A lasting reminder of the triumph of the "good soldiers of the good God" was the ironwork enclosing the Chapel of the Holy Cross in the cloister of the capital city's Cathedral. It contained the chains once used to encircle the tent of Caliph En Nasr. These chains were memorialized in the arms of Navarre.

During almost three hundred years preceding Francis' birth, the fortunes of his country had seesawed in quality of government and degrees of independence.

Following the year 1234 the royal family was mostly of French extraction, and French in leanings. Charles the Bad combined attractiveness of person with outrageous vices. In the following century Navarre accepted control by Castile upon promise of retention of her traditional *fueros*, the charters of local privileges. She kept, moreover, the handling of the land distribution and of taxes, the right of free trade, and the right to establish treaties with countries of her choice.

Pampeluna was more than the capital. It was the heart of Navarre. Certain continental place names have an old-world flavor to them — Carcassonne, Seville, Liège, Pampeluna — perhaps due to a mental tendency to invest such names with colorful historical associations. Whatever truth lies herein, Pampeluna is remembered, and *memorable*, because on Whit Tuesday, May 20, 1521, a Basque soldier by the name of Ignatius Loyola was wounded in the leg by a flying stone, dislodged by a cannon shot during the French attack upon Pampeluna.

No one at the hapless garrison, certainly not Ignatius himself, knew that the red flash of the French cannon marked a moment of flaming historical significance in the sixteenth century. For Loyola the wounding was a moment of bitter frustration, *finis* to the hopeless though gallant defense of the walls of the city. Consolation, if any, lay in Ignatius' realization that he had fallen "with honor." Shortly before, the second in command of the fortification — Herrera, who had been left in charge when the Duke of Najera went off to seek reinforcements — decided upon surrender. To a man of honor like Ignatius the thought was unbearable. "I never admired Aeneas," he declared, "for abandoning his flame-consumed city! It is the coward who avoids the common danger. And to go down in the common disaster — well, that's the chance that brave men take."

Ignatius, at the time, knew nothing of Francis Xavier. The fortunes of both, however, were to be so intermingled in subsequent years that the story of neither can be told without the story of the other.

The son of Loyola was fifteen years older than Francis. His birth occurred in 1491, the year in which Columbus set out in search of a new route to the Indies. Later, under Ignatius' direction, Francis himself would undertake a purposeful voyage to India and the Orient. Both sons of the Basque provinces, they experienced the hardening of body, the strong tempering of spirit, which the Basque land bestowed upon its sons. Ignatius came into the world in the castle of Loyola, set above Azpeitia in the Biscayan area of Guipúzcoa. Even as Francis, by birth his fellow countryman and yet to be his foremost son by spiritual affiliation,

the defender of the Pampeluna fortress came from noble lineage, from the social level of the *parientes maiores*.

At the time of Francis' birth, in the west wing of the family castle, the better days of Navarre were approaching their end.

This was neither known nor thought of on the Tuesday of Holy Week, 1506, when Francis Xavier was born. Don Miguel, vicar of the Church of Santa Maria, baptized the sixth child of the Xavier family. Tradition would have it that the boy's given name was in honor of Francis of Assisi, especially devoted to the Passion of Christ. The fact that the baptized received the maternal surname of Xavier would indicate he was expected eventually to receive a portion of his mother's property.

Legend has an irritating, if understandable, way of coupling the names of the great, or near great, with extravagant fancies. The saint was indeed born in one of the rooms in the west wing of the castle. After the saint's canonization a chapel was built on the north side of the main building, which, at the time, was in a dismal state of disrepair, for the castle had suffered greatly during the Spanish-Navarrese wars. It so happened that the chapel, which, it was hoped, would divert the steps of pilgrims from the main building, was built near the old stable.

"See," exclaimed the happy, impressionable, and imaginative members of the pilgrimage brotherhood, "how close to the stable the chapel is!" To the overpious the next illogical step was an easy transition. The story grew. Francis was born *in* the stable. How fitting; how consoling to realize our saint, even as his beloved Saviour, was born in a stable.

The muse of history must have heaved a sigh of impatience, then gone on with the business of promoting accurate historical writing.

There is no way of knowing what thoughts transpired in the mind of Don Juan beside the baptismal font as Francis, the child given to his wife in her late years, became a child of God. If, in fatherly fashion, he hoped Francis would have a more impressive career than his own, his hope was to be realized. Meanwhile Juan, following custom, draped the infant's baptismal robe be-

side those of his brothers and sisters on the rail above the font.

Francis' father could bequeath to his sons the tradition of learning. Don Juan, lawyer and active in government, had received his doctorate in the university at Bologna. With quiet competence he filled the position of court auditor at Pampeluna and, in 1476, became alcaide of the Cortes. For his services, in 1479, in handling border problems touching both Navarre and Aragon, the hereditary estate was granted a status of nobility. The family fortune, founded about 1350 by one Pedro de Jassu, was advanced by Juan's marriage to Doña Maria, who brought her husband the properties and titles of "Azpilcueta" and "Xavier," inherited from her father and mother respectively. Juan, himself, moved in court circles, serving as adviser to Queen Catherine. When, in 1484, the three estates of Navarre took oath of allegiance to the newly crowned queen, and her husband, King Jean, the oaths were taken "between the hands" of the court's brilliant young adviser. The roots of the Jassu family belonged to the French side of the domain, but long since the family interests had brought them into the active life of Spanish Navarre.

Francis Xavier's heritage was one compounded of gentility and a sufficiency of earthly goods. The rugged sandstone and rocky sides of the eminence upon which the family castle stood not far from the River Aragon was playground for his earliest years. He was Basque by racial strain and Navarrese by family allegiance. The fiery nature of his people, never more ardent than when faced with adversity, was to prove, after his strong Catholic upbringing, his most valuable inheritance.

Francis was a son of Navarre. It is not surprising, then, that when his running years brought him up against battle and conflict, he proved to be one who could "summon up the blood."

[Chapter 2]

A BOY GROWS OLDER

Frequently the early days, the "green years," of men of achievement make an unrewarding study. This is notably true when the subject is remembered rather for what he *did* than for what he *was*.

Francis *did* things in adult life. His achievement won for him the title of the world's "second greatest missionary," taking secondary position only to the unique Paul of Tarsus. To the discerning mind, however, what he accomplished before the eyes of men was necessarily secondary to what he *was*. The flame of his zeal, sweeping evil from its path in missionary activity at once marvelous and miraculous, sprang from within. Necessarily that fire was nourished first deep within the precincts of his heart and mind. Without inward ardor there would have been wanting the external, visible flame.

Unlike Paul, Francis grew up within the household of the faith. Historians tell of his "conversion" in Paris, and not without cause. It was not a change from infidelity to the Christian faith. His mutation, rather, was one from casual Catholicism to incipient high sanctity. The bedrock was present within the citadel of the university professor's soul. Upon it, under prompting by Ignatius Loyola, a tower would arise, never to collapse in subsequent storms.

"The first and necessary thing for you to do," St. Vincent de Paul told his missionaries when he sent them to Madagascar, "is to take for your model upon your missionary voyaging the great and holy Francis Xavier."

Holiness. It lay about Francis in his infancy, and in his boyhood years. The atmosphere of quiet sanctity, reassuring if not perhaps extraordinary, surrounded him at Xavier. Not to understand this fact is to miss something in the formation of his character.

"To say Basque," ran the ancient proverb, "is to say Catholic." The land of Spain, giving the Church a "galaxy of saints," provided two of the foremost of these in the sixteenth century—both from that small but vibrant northern border area of the Basque provinces—Ignatius Loyola and Francis Xavier.

To understand these two, founding father and foremost son of the religious company to emerge in 1534, it is wise to consider the particular stage of history upon which they walked.

When Alexander VI died in 1503 following attacks of fever and suffocation, it seemed, as the historian Pastor points out, "as though his reign were meant by Providence to demonstrate the truth that though men may hurt the Church, they cannot harm her."

And before the century ended men were called upon to pledge allegiance to either that pseudoreligious monstrosity, the "Reformation," or to the ancient and mother Church. Martin Luther stated his creed in the declaration: "I have no wish to be reconciled to Rome for all eternity." Facing him, figuratively but realistically also, Peter Canisius protested: "I have solemnly promised God always to ask what I should do, and in nothing will I follow my own will." It was a century of revolt and change, of new-world discovery and old-world collapse. And, at its threshold, young Francis Xavier entered the history of the century's troubled years.

Francis' parents did not believe that their prime obligation toward their children was to keep them "happy." The Christian education of their six children was their primary concern. Happiness, as human and proper parental experience has proved, is a normal by-product, and not an end in itself in upbringing.

When Francis was born, Navarre was at peace with Castile. National peace mirrored itself in the peaceful complexion of Catholic life at the castle of Xavier.

In infancy and boyhood, Francis' *milieu* was distinctly Catholic. Juan and Maria, with sufficiency of the world's goods, rebuilt the

parish church of Xavier. To it was added a rectory, or *abbadia*, for the residence of the chaplain priest. With him would live a few other priests, or at least holy laymen, to care for parochial matters, the recitation of the Daily Office, and the welfare needs of the parishioners. The rectory, built shortly before Francis' birth, housed Doña Maria's relative, Don Miguel de Azpilcueta, as Vicar. It was Don Miguel who baptized the future missionary. Not far away stood the little village of Sanguessa and, within its environs, religious houses of the Friars Preachers, Friars Minor, and the Discalced Carmelites. Sanguessa lay twenty-five miles east of Pampeluna. From the end of the town's principal street, Sanguessa's *Calle Mayor*, a twisting, rising, bump-laden road climbs a half-dozen miles upward and across the orchard and vine slopes to the Xavier holdings near the Aragonese frontier. A mile away stands the old San Salvador de Leyre monastery, wherein were buried the kings of Navarre in the stone building dedicated to the Holy Saviour.

In the parish church the High Mass was celebrated each day. Regularly, in the evening, the solemn Vespers were chanted. The rules set down for the *abbadia*, by Francis' parents who donated it, were strict. The deed of gift itself was sermonlike in tone. All rectory residents were to avoid hunting and cardplaying, although one might as a hobby fish or tend the gardens. Religious literature was to be read at table. Careful direction was given for the proper recitation of the Divine Office.

Within the castle there was regular invocation of the Xavier home's patrons: the stern recluse, St. Jerome, and the warrior angel, Michael. All family members were prompted to a particular devotion to the members of the Holy Trinity.

These details serve to indicate the type of parents whom Francis had to rear him. Especially prominent, and attractive to consider long after Francis' life was done, was the family attachment to the great family crucifix. During thirteenth-century Moorish invasion, when Azuarez de Sada went to Xavier, the crucifix reached the castle. It was placed carefully in a secret wall recess. At times, when danger was remote, the household and retainers would kneel in petition before the exposed crucifix, their eyes intent upon

the sharply agonizing lines of the holy face. In Francis' boyhood the crucifix, made of hard nutwood, hung in the little castle oratory of St. Michael.

"In truth," Francis wrote from the East, long years afterward, "our Lord knows what consolation we have received in realizing how great is the power of the Cross, seeing it [in this mission field] rise thus alone, triumphant amidst so much Mohammedanism!"

In his earliest years there was perhaps the possibility that Francis might become a "spoiled child." His brothers and sisters were much older than he. His mother was over forty when he was born. At the time his mother's sister, Violante, was a member of the household. This woman, Francis' beloved *tia Violanti*, was a person of acknowledged sanctity; of her it has been said that she was "a nun in all but vows."

Until the year of his death, 1516, Francis' father was very frequently away from the family home upon matters of law and government. It would not be very surprising to learn that the single child, being reared by the devoted women of the castle, was the object of overattention and indulgence.

Fortunately, the picture is quite different. Francis' early years were years marked by discipline, by strict religious training, and by the happy attendant circumstance of generous affection. From his mother and aunt, Francis first acquired a knowledge of God and the precepts of virtue. Devotion to one's home, that domestic *pietas*, was inculcated together with the characteristically Spanish piety toward one's country. When his elder brothers, Michael and John, undertook a military career, it was to Francis' observant scrutiny a natural manifestation of his people's quasi-religious loyalty to God-given authority.

Francis, the Benjamin of the household, had little or no natural bent for a career in arms. In childhood his interest, to his father's great satisfaction, was in study, in reading, and in the acquisition of knowledge. As a boy he was described as "both affectionate and studious." This seriousness does not, obviously, necessitate belief that the growing boy was dull in the company of other youngsters nor that boyhood's games were alien to his nature. He was of the

Basques, which the well-founded legend maintained were "a people to both live and die with a song upon their lips."

Don Juan and Doña Maria agreed that their third son, given them unexpectedly, should be marked for the service of the Church. His deft agility in mastering lessons of all sorts bespoke one who would well take his place in the ranks of the clergy after proper years of training. Perhaps this child will rise to high ecclesiastical position — who knows? It is permitted, is it not, to parents to plan so?

In any event, Francis was given the tonsure while still a young boy. The priests of the Xavier *abbadia* undoubtedly were happy to concur in the plans of the parents for the future career of their son. In the parish church of Santa Maria de Javier he cultivated, with youthful simplicity, the quiet, deep devotion to the Mother of God which is so strong in Spanish souls. Don Miguel taught the boy Latin, and from the wandering entertainers, the *Bertsulariak*, he heard tales of good and evil, especially of the red devil, *Juan Gorri*, and this particular villain's unending assault upon the good.

"St. Michael," in angelic warrior's costume, danced the intricate sword dance before the church on Corpus Christi. It is not difficult to imagine a small boy's wonder at the sight. Nor the lasting effect upon an impressionable soul of the daily Mass. Saturday mornings the Mass honored the Virgin Mary, and each evening closed with the recitation of the *Salve Regina* by the members of the castle. Such domestic practices as chanting of Vespers by the clergy attached to the household seem to a later age as, to put it mildly, unusual. For Francis, however, they were simply a regular part of a daily life marked by the twin accents of religion and necessary discipline. If, indeed, the thoughts of youth are "the long, long thoughts," we can only believe that in his impressionable youth the youngest Xavier daydreamed of a future more or less brilliant in the service of the Church.

An aura of hardy romance, with memories of heroism and chivalry, moved about the heads of all in the border castle. It touched and frequently fired the imagination of the boy.

The impact of some eight hundred years of struggle between the Christian people of the peninsula and the ever threatening Islamic invaders colored the character of all Spain. Men died, with grimly smiling lips, to protect the Catholic heritage received from their forebears. A mere fifteen years stood between Francis' birth and the ultimate collapse of Granada. People still spoke of the great Christian victory. In 1501, during the uprising in the Red Sierra, Alonso de Aguilar had fallen in death before the triumphant Moors. One reads of the itinerant minstrels who enacted the centuries-old battles for the cheering village peoples: the "Turks" and "Moors," ferocious in red costumes, pitted against players swathed in blue, the livery of the good Mother of the good God. Again, Francis had often heard the saga of the great Roland. It was not far from the Xavier position, on the border, that Roland's death call sounded for the distant Charlemagne, echoing through the forest of Roncesvalles.

For the family of Xavier the "lights began to go out" in the year 1512, when Francis was six.

In that important year war broke out between Castile and Navarre. The frontier way of life was shaken and, ere the upheaval ended, the Xavier family fortunes had changed irrevocably. War, and its attendant turmoil, now became something the youngest Xavier would know from close proximity.

For some years, far from Xavier, Pope Julius II had wrestled with the contemporary balance-of-power problems of Christian Europe. Successively, the star of Spain, of France, of Venice, and of the Holy Empire rose and fell. The Roman Pontiff, an aging Italian, determined that Italy would not be submerged while neighboring powers climbed to ascendancy.

The family fortunes of Don Juan de Jassu had risen through the clan's allegiance to the royal house of Navarre. By the same route they were destined to fall.

In 1504 — two years before Francis' birth — Queen Isabella died. Shortly thereafter King Ferdinand of Aragon married the beautiful Germaine de Foix, a young woman of eighteen. The ruler's new happiness was short-lived. Philip of Austria, his son-in-law, came close to success in an effort to remove Ferdinand from his throne.

Philip's death ended the distressing and ambitious scheme. His pathetic widow, the Mad Queen Joan, unable to bring herself to give her dead husband burial, traveled about with the corpse of Philip. National affairs were in a troubled state, but the confusion served Ferdinand's purposes. It was a moment for him to solidify his dominions. The Navarrese area, lying south of the Pyrenees, must be annexed to his crown. Navarre, however, had its own view of the dismal project. As a first step it moved closer to alliance with France.

In 1509, Cardinal Ximénes (whose decisions would later affect the castle of Xavier) busied himself in leading Spanish soldiers against the Moors at the battle of Oran. The prelate expressed his opinion that gunpowder smelled sweeter than incense during the days of repelling the infidel. It was that sort of era.

All *seemed* well at the Xavier home as 1512 began. Madalena, as has been seen, was in the convent of Gandia, Maria was off in the convent in Pampeluna. Francis' elder brothers, Juan and Michael, were in the service of the court of Navarre. In the spring of the year, Don Juan returned home from one of his many trips. A joyous day approached: his daughter Ana would marry Don Diego de Ezpeleta.

Word reached the region, shortly after Easter, that Gaston de Foix, "the thunderbolt of Italy" and brilliant young Frenchman who was cousin to Navarre's Queen, had fallen in death at Ravenna. Gaston, brother of Ferdinand's young Queen, died in his moment of victory over the Spaniards. This defeat of the Spaniards was to prove costly to the Xavier holdings. Don Juan de Jassu would strive to remain both loyal and neutral. The move proved impossible.

Ferdinand of Spain was not one to forget the defeat of the Spaniards at Ravenna. When, following the death of their leader, the French retired to the Alps, Ferdinand determined to show both the King of Navarre and his ally, Louis XII of France, who would be master of the peninsula. First he would bring his warfare into the foe's territory by assaulting the southeast frontier. In June, English reinforcements landed at Guipúzcoa to assist the Spaniards. These ten thousand English under the Marquis of

Dorset joined the Spanish forces, led by the old Duke of Alba.

It was the right hour for Ferdinand.

France, he knew, stood as the enemy of the Holy League. Ferdinand had the sympathy of the Pope, the Emperor, England, and Venice. Queen Catherine and her husband, as Juan de Jassu found upon his hurried return to Pampeluna, had decided upon a French alliance. Ferdinand, in turn, demanded passage for his armed forces through Navarre itself, as well as occupation of its half-dozen best fortresses. Juan de Jassu was sent to delay Ferdinand by proposing negotiations.

It was too late. Ferdinand's plans carried forward. The Duke of Alba moved against the capital, Pampeluna, on July 23. The city surrendered on the twenty-fourth. King Jean and Queen Catherine retired quickly to Lumbier, a few short miles from Xavier; thence to France where, in lonely exile, they died five years afterward.

By the first of August, Navarre was under Ferdinand's control. Seven centuries of independence had reached their end. No matter how colorful, how worthy the history of Navarre had been until 1512, it now remained but a province of Castile.

In 1515 Spanish Navarre was formally made part of Aragon. In the same year, with heavy heart, Francis Xavier's father returned from the exile he voluntarily shared with Jean and Catherine. Grief for his country's loss of independence was augmented by Juan's realization that it was no longer easy to provide for the material wants of his family. Navarre was now under different, alien as it were, control. Don Juan, known as loyal legal adviser to the ousted regime, was hard put to it in seeking rents, fees due for legal services, and the necessary means of sustenance. Moreover, he was a man with a broken heart.

Francis was nine and a half years old when Ferdinand ordered the sale of the lands belonging to the family and estate of Xavier. This blow, falling in June of 1515, eventuated in the death of Don Juan de Jassu on the sixteenth of the following October.

His youngest son, with the quiet and impressionable observance of childhood, now knew the impact of family grief, catching as it did overtones from the background of his country's collapse. His

watchful eyes saw the tile removed from the family roof to give, as custom had it, "swift passage of the soul of the departed unto heaven." That passage upward of his father's spirit was indicated in the dull, upcurling smoke of the little mound of hay left burning upon the Xavier threshold. The *Etcheko Jauna* (the Master of the House) was dead; even the beehives were draped in black cloth, each piece cut in the form of a cross.

Something of the relative swiftness of life, and the slippery hold of rulers upon their restless thrones, must have touched the thoughtful young mind. Navarre's rulers were off in a defeated exile. Don Juan would never smile upon his wife and children again. Michael and Juan sought to urge upon Francis a career in arms. Even in 1516 the die-hards of Navarre were planning an insurrection, determined to throw off the detested Spanish rule. The sons of Xavier knew of Doña Maria's fruitless efforts to have restored to the family the rights and holdings in Sanguessa and Pampeluna. The elder brothers, twenty-one and nineteen, appealed to Francis to follow the military career. "No matter what has happened," they urged, "it has been by the arms and soldiering of our family through long years that Xavier attained eminence."

"No," was Francis' quiet reply. "I will follow the career of our father. I will become a student, even as he, and, who knows? it may be that by learning rather than arms I may be better able to rebuild our family fortunes."

Juan and Michael shrugged. What can one expect of a ten-year-old? They themselves knew their course. They went off to join a movement aimed at restoring Catherine and Jean. The movement was folly following upon defeat. It brought upon Navarre and Xavier the final punishing blows.

Acting for King Charles, Cardinal Ximénès, then Viceroy and Governor of Spain, moved quickly. The remaining Navarrese private holdings were seized. Doña Maria's castle at Xavier and the Torre de Azpilcueta were "partially dismantled." Her subjects were harassed by the enemy's agents. At Xavier the outer wall and gatehouse were demolished. The emptied moat was filled in and three castle towers were reduced to rubble. An agent of Castile was installed. Rent income was a thing of the past. Doña Maria's

funds continued to dwindle. The young Francis was experiencing a new anguish of mind as he beheld the devastation wrought against his "good home" by men who, in turn, believed they were doing something good themselves.

It is one of the ironies of history that Cardinal Ximénes, the force behind the oppression of the family of Xavier, is truly recognized by historians as one of the greatest initiators of the Catholic Reform, that sixteenth-century movement which eventually culminated in the Counter Reformation. He had no way of knowing, however, that the son of one of the Navarrese families, whose fortunes he altered for the worse, would one day prove a flame of spiritual reformation within the century.

The sixteenth-century's battle lines, in the realms of religion and culture, were beginning to be drawn. While Francis was a ten-year-old, most men did not realize the import of certain stirrings within Catholic Europe.

In 1516, the year of Don Juan's death, Albert of Brandenburg, newly appointed Archbishop of Mayence, was noticing with dismay the results of certain directives of his touching upon certain indulgences. He had offered a plenary indulgence, in three dioceses under his jurisdiction, for those contributing to help defray the expense of his installation in Mayence. The Dominican monk, John Tetzel, preaching the indulgence, pointed out the necessary prerequisite of confession of one's sins. On the other hand, he conceded that the state of grace was not necessary if the fruits of the indulgence were applied to the dead. In the growing complexity, many believed that the offering of money was the *essential* condition for gaining the indulgence and its benefits.

Luther left no doubt of his impression of the matter. On the Vigil of All Saints, in 1517, he walked to the door of the collegiate church at Wittenberg and nailed thereon his celebrated Ninety-Five Theses: one after the other an attack on the Papacy, the administration of Catholic indulgences, and so on. The thick oaken panels shook. So, too, did the house of Christendom throughout Europe.

The blow would cost the Church many adherents. In Xavier and Navarre, a young lad was growing, who would help to balance

the scales by bringing, to the side of the Church, great multitudes of new Catholics, albeit far from the shores of old Europe.

For almost twenty years (1513-1521 and 1523-1534), the workings of Medici papal diplomacy brought about miserable results in the highest circle of the Church. The prestige of the Holy See was suffering. It is quite possible that the worried Pope Leo X, afraid of the impending election of the youthful Spanish king as Holy Roman Emperor, gave little thought to the "impudence" of one Martin Luther. It seemed more important to develop cordial relations with the new Emperor and shift papal approval away from French policy.

Understandably enough, both nations and individuals are usually occupied with immediate problems.

Thus, while Pope Leo lay dying in 1521, men and factions in distant Navarre were occupied with the final attempts of the nation to throw off the Spanish dominance by force of arms in the mountains of Guipúzcoa.

The revolt of the *Comuneros*, with the help of Francis I, led to the noteworthy siege of Pampeluna. Juan and Michael Xavier were among the soldiers storming the capital city's fortress. Defying them and the French soldiers was Ignatius of Loyola, blackened with gunpowder and determined to resist to the death. Flying stone, loosened by an invading cannon shot, broke apart that determination and shattered Loyola's leg.

Francis — reminding us after the event of the young left-at-home boy David — was not with his brothers. His contact with the fallen Ignatius would come later.

• [Chapter 3] •

TO THE CENTER OF LEARNING

"Life," Samuel Coleridge has written, "is thorny, and youth is vain."

Adults, having experienced both, will agree. They know life proves not so much a hymn as a struggle. Francis Xavier was to learn this truth during a life span more crowded than that of most men. He learned that youth's garment of years, worn with ambitious excitement through swift-passing days, is a thing sewn with vanities and dreams. The vanities pass. The dreams, precious prerogative of young years, often endure. In Francis' lifetime the vanities passed. The dreams of his youth, measuring success in terms of mind-inspired conquests, these passed. Other dreams, however, took their place.

The realization of Francis' ambition for greatness was to come in a realm which he did not envision as a young man.

In October, 1525, Francis set out for Paris. His boyhood was behind him, as he joined a little band of clerics and prospective students on the journey.

The small entourage moved on horseback across the rough, rising and falling roads of the Pyrenees. Francis' thoughts, if not an occasional backward glance, turned to the stern years behind him at Xavier. The nineteen-year-old rider, his face brushed by the October winds, was not unmindful of his family's overturned fortunes. These he had determined to repair in the years ahead.

The travelers passed the stretching steppes of *Les Landes* and

the dried trees of the Vendean groves. Moving northward Francis passed the small area of Saint Juan Pied-de-Port. From this neighborhood his Jassu forebears had come, and he thought of his beloved father, now dead for almost a decade. Or was he thinking of the young Roland who died nearby, many years ago in a more chivalrous era? The Navarrese students riding with him, their cloaks drawn tight against the mountain winds, might also have ruminated upon the "vanished era."

Horses and riders crossed the fertile Touraine plains. They advanced on the Paris road atop the high dyke built by French kings to restrain the Loire. Francis knew the education lying ahead in the center of learning, the city of Paris, would prove expensive for what remained of the family funds. Money from a mill at Burguete, a Xavier holding, helped pay for the trip and the studies to follow it. The trip left far behind the castle of Xavier. Francis was destined not to visit it again.

Behind, moreover, lay his mother's appeals to Charles V, at Barcelona, for a repayment of large sums loaned by her father and by Don Juan to the crown of Navarre. The appeals were fruitless. Upon certain appeals Francis' mother signed herself, "the sorrowful and sad Maria d'Azpilcueta." Within her home at Xavier the unwelcome Castilian underling officer lived, instructed to watch for inklings of any further "rebellion." Not for nothing was Doña Maria prompted to reiterate her daily prayer: "God give to us the angel of peace!"

In 1517 the death of Ximénes marked the end of an era in the peninsula. The Moorish disturbances were spent. Spain had become a united kingdom. Vasco da Gama had journeyed to the east and Columbus had opened new horizons across the Atlantic to the west. A century of upheaval got under way.

Behind the Paris-bound student lay national and domestic upheaval. Michael and Juan struggled mightily, and in vain, in the guerrilla warfare marking the last desperate attempts of the Navarrese to withstand the over-all dominance of the Spanish crown. Their fighting in the hills of Guipúzcoa, satisfying to a soldier's national pride, had won for them nothing more than condemnation to death. There had been nothing ambiguous, the

forces of Charles V knew, in the Xavier brothers' part in the defense of the Maya fortress. In the general amnesty of 1523, however, their names were included — a move of expediency by the victorious Spanish.

Michael and Juan, with their cousin, held strong positions in the walled frontier town of Fuentarabbia. For two years the fortress held out successfully against the Spanish. The defenders were in a position to bargain. Would the Castilians reverse the death sentences and agree not to seize the defenders' lands if Fuentarabbia were surrendered? The Castilians shrugged and smiled grimly. They would agree to the terms.

On his journey to Paris, Francis might have recalled the part his brothers took in the storming of the capital city's garrison at Pampeluna. He could not have known at the time that he was destined to meet in Paris the young Guipúzcoan nobleman-soldier who had fallen in Pampeluna's defense. Nor that the victorious French at the time, respecting the valor of Ignatius, sent him for convalescence to his brother's castle at Azpeitia. Nor what the soldier's wounding was to mean, in the providence of God, to Francis himself.

At nineteen, Francis was strong limbed and of handsome features. Running and jumping, both favorite sports, had developed his body in the precincts of Xavier and during the months when he attended college classes at Sangüessa. He was as diligent in studies, under watchful tutors, as he was when playing the Basque *jeu de paume*. Basque boys and young men never tired of this ball-court game, forerunner of the whipping modern *pelota*. Francis' biographers tell of his athletic skill, his native ability to win friends, and of a quiet reserve which inspired respect and deference.

Although Francis would join his brothers in the hunting of game in the preserves and forests adjacent to Xavier, he was of definite mind not to follow them, as we have seen, in the way of soldiering. Indicative, however, of his respect and affection for his brothers, together with a deep sense of appreciation for what both had done for him, are lines taken from a letter written from Paris (March, 1535) to Michael:

"I have written to you of late more than once by different hands.

I had several strong reasons for doing so. The first and strongest of these was the tie of natural duty binding me to you, and that respect which, next to the love for my parents, is due in the highest degree from your younger brother. . . .

"There was, moreover, my gratitude for your great and multiple kindnesses to me. These have indeed been so many and of such a kind that I'm afraid I'll never be able to repay them as they deserve."

It was Francis' own wish that he go to the university in Paris, that "university not of a city but of the world." Don Martin, his mother's cousin and the young man's tutor, strongly recommended the university. To a youth of Francis' imagination, the appeal of university life in the great capital, the opportunity to meet men from other lands, and the Renaissance flavor touching Parisian life and studies, these had tremendous appeal. If he were to attain eminence in the Church, Paris was the logical point of departure for higher studies.

To Francis, almost twenty, it was evident that all was not well in the household of God. He and his fellow travelers discussed the reports, inadequate though they might be, of the movements troubling the Catholic soul of Europe as the century passed the first quarter mark.

Three years before, in 1522, England and France had engaged in war. This brought back to England, from the French court, the dark-haired Anne Boleyn, the lady with the mole on her neck, the angular features the French found unappealing, and the will power which would force England's Henry to capitulate after three years. If Henry would have her (Anne slyly intimated during two years of dalliance) he must have her as his wife.

And Queen Catherine?

"Catherine could be divorced, could she not?"

Henry VIII finally decided she could. Many Englishmen, whose religiosity was not religion, went along with the monarch. Henry would have Anne as his queen—an eventuality which made Cardinal Wolsey sick to his stomach—and the ancient Church of Christ would no longer have England.

"Would to the Lord," Thomas More was saying to his son-in-law,

Roper, as they walked beside the Thames River, "I were put in a sack and here presently cast into the Thames, upon condition that three things were well established in Christendom:

"The first is that where as the most part of Christian princes be at mortal war, they were all at universal peace. The second: that where the Church of Christ is, at this present, sore afflicted with many errors and heresies, it were well settled in perfect uniformity of religion. The third: that where the matter of the King's marriage is now come in question, it were to the glory of God and the quietness of all parties brought to a good conclusion."

It was not brought to a good conclusion. England's King and Thomas More both lost their heads, the one by lustful overthrow and the other by martyrdom — and before the half century was finished the kingdom, "Mary's England," was lost to Rome.

Francis Xavier, en route to Paris, had heard of the growing revolt in the north, especially in the German states. He would have agreed with Thomas More that the "Church of Christ is at this present sore afflicted with many errors and heresies."

The name of Martin Luther was being heard more and more frequently during the past eight years. There was that talk of Luther in connection with the matter of indulgences. With an instinct for what a later age would have called "public relations," Luther penned his *Appeal from a Pope Ill-informed to a Pope to be Better Informed*, in October, 1518. The following month, relying on support from the Prince Elector Frederick of Saxony should such defense be necessary against the Church authority, the heretical, fertile pen put together the *Appeal from the Pope to a General Council*. European Catholic clergy shook worried heads and the harassed Leo X wrung his hands.

The Pontiff sent to Saxony the gentle Charles of Miltiz, his chamberlain, to retrieve the situation. Leo had already, in November, published a letter showing clearly the distinction between remission of guilt achieved by the Sacrament and the remission of temporal punishment due to sins provided by the indulgence. He clearly defended, however, the pontifical right to draw "from the treasury of the merits of Jesus Christ and His Saints."

Would Luther rectify his position? He smiled at the papal

legate. Let the legate relax. Luther took pen and wrote what he called his letter of submission. In it he declared: "God and all creatures are my witnesses that it has never been my intention to oppose the Roman Church."

This was in January of 1519. A fine resolution for the new year then beginning. Miltiz, however, knew some bad moments when he reread the letter. The author had carefully omitted from it any explicit retraction of his erroneous teachings. Again, by the following June, in the Disputation of Leipsic, the troublesome one completely rejected all authority, including that of Church councils. All biblical questions, moreover, were proclaimed to be subject to private judgment alone.

It was a bright October morning when the group of travelers turned a corner of the road and knew that immediately ahead lay Paris. "Fraught with all learning," it lifted its contrasting sections above the Seine waters. The tired students stared at the fabled city in the distance, their hearts lifting with sudden excitement. Behind were the lesser cities they had passed: Bordeaux, Poitiers, Tours, and Orléans of troubled history. The horses, halted momentarily, were spurred forward.

Francis' searching eyes rested upon the distant sun-washed towers of Notre Dame. Here was a first link with the past he left behind him: the visible reminder that devotion to Mary flowered in every place where lived her sons.

Through the dirty, at times evil-smelling, narrow streets of the Parisian Latin Quarter Francis approached the College of St. Barbara.

The *mise en scène* for the academic years he was now entering could not but have been somewhat of a shock to Francis. Fresh from the sharp and rugged cleanliness of his native hill country, the land of Navarre where gentility of deportment and gracious living marked the life of both poor and rich, Francis found trying the realization that the squalor of the *Quartier Latin* would be part of the "academic atmosphere" surrounding his years of study.

Malodorous sewage ran unchecked over the streets' uneven stones. Ragamuffins whose forte and delight lay in picking pedestrians' pockets were on all sides. Part of the "sounds of Paris" reaching

Francis' ears during the next eleven years was the shrill cries of street hawkers peddling sweets and soggy muffins to students and professors and all who would buy. The occasional flash of red and purple trimmings on the robes of the passing prelates contrasted sharply with the black gowns of milling students and the torn, patched jackets of street gamins.

"Is this," Francis murmured to himself, "the great University of Paris?"

It was, at least, the background. St. Barbara stood in the section known as the *Preau des Clercs*. Nearby rose the Abbey of St. Genevieve. Crowded together, between the Seine's left bank and the crescent wall of Philippe Auguste, were half a hundred colleges of varying size. The bedraggled area also contained churches, taverns, hospitals, convents, rooming houses, and brothels. Long years before, in the mid-ninth century, Louis the Young, King of France, initiated the beginnings of the university. It began beneath masters conducting classes on the Isle of Notre Dame, and properly is considered an outgrowth of the cathedral-school continental system. Philippe Auguste favored the growth, and himself surrounded the narrow streets with the noted wall. Within its enclosure arose wooden dwellings, halls for classes, and the monasteries and chapels within the district. Historians note the favor shown the university by both popes and French rulers until the institution grew to exert great influence in affairs of both Church and State. It was called "a republic within a monarchy." Through its long history, down to its end in the upheaving Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century, the university "paid its own way," largely by the tuition paid by students.

Through the damp alleys and crowded lanes of the Quarter moved students and professors. The narrow, vaulted rooms for lectures were frequently cold in winter. Often certain college classrooms offered nothing more than straw mats for attentive students, sitting cross-legged as they took notes, listening to the lecturer whose prerogative it was to possess a table and chair upon the raised platform at one end of the room.

To the modern mind, accustomed to think of university life in terms of such campuses as those of Fordham, Harvard,

Columbia, or Cambridge, there is a flavor to the university attended by Francis Xavier, an atmosphere which can be called, for want of a better word, "medieval." Or, if you will, "monastic."

The lack of sanitation was taken without grumbling on the part of students. An occasional visitor, however, did not hesitate to state his opinion of the sordid surroundings at the university. Erasmus, for instance, declared: "I carried away from the place nothing except a body infected with disease and a goodly supply of vermin."

The newly arrived Xavier entered himself at the College of St. Barbara.

Students from the Spanish peninsula, since the fourteenth century, attended the university. They had, however, no college of their own but were received in St. Barbara. Students were divided into four classifications: Normans, Picards, Frenchmen, and Germans. The Spanish students were classified with the French. The pairings-off resulted not only in a broadening contact but frequently in noisy, uproarious, and adventurous forays.

Street fights between students of various colleges were not uncommon. The traditional heartiness and robust frolics of young collegians were frequently replaced by what must be called a forthright brawling in the streets. Some students, moreover, were not above the pursuit of vice and the worst forms of tavern drunkenness. Even though the respective colleges had their sets of rules of behavior for the students, within and without the collegiate premises, these rules were broken as often as they were observed. Considering the squalor and confinement of the Latin Quarter, this is not surprising, especially since the area was a virtual melting pot for young men of all nationalities, many of them far from their own homes.

As often happens, the university authorities were proud of their autonomy and the secular police guardians were often given short shrift when they tried to maintain order. The attitude of the police therefore had become one of almost passive indifference. Francis could not have been at St. Barbara long before he heard, for instance, of certain student demonstrations in the year before his arrival.

"You should have been here for the fun last year," he was told, "when they were trying to elect the new Rector in the Church of Saint Julien-le-Pauvre. We didn't approve the choice of Rector, you see, so we smashed in the doors of the church during the election. Then, when it was over, we showed our reactions by hooting at the new Rector and throwing rocks through the stained-glass windows. It was *really* something to see!"

Francis was pleased to be at St. Barbara, which was of more recent foundation (1460) than the other colleges. Living conditions there were less primitive. Francis shuddered almost involuntarily as he gazed at the nearby College of Montaigu on the Rue des Chiens, of all the colleges "the most famous, the most gloomy, and the most dirty."

Yet all of this was indeed part of the world of science, of letters, and of the higher education which Francis Xavier desired so strongly. Preliminary to his studies in logic, he took examinations in rhetoric, grammar, and Greek. Three years' study lay ahead of him as he prepared for his baccalaureate.

In Xavier's time the student's day began early. Francis, with fellow students, arose with the ringing of the bell at four in the morning. The young philosophers dressed by the light of small candles, to attend the opening lecture, which began at the troublesome hour of five. Following the hour-long lecture, all professors and students marched to chapel to attend Mass. Thereafter the brief rite of breakfast, consisting largely of a roll of bread fresh from the oven, and then on to the long morning class from eight to ten. An hour of private exercises followed and at eleven all took dinner in the common refectory. During the meal passages were read aloud from the Bible or the lives of the saints.

Immediately before the assemblage began eating, the principal took occasion to hand out admonitions and penalties for breach of rules.

In the afternoon there was a period of questioning upon the morning lectures. Then followed the inevitable continental siesta, during which time all were urged to listen as one of the class read aloud the works of some poet or the phrases of some fine

rhetorician. This, it was believed, would "prevent the devil from discovering idle minds."

From three in the afternoon until five, more classes followed. Repetitions were frequent and individual attention stressed. If such curriculum was heavy for the individual, the end result was scholastically wholesome and profitable. Following a meager supper came a further "repetition," and then night prayers in common in the chapel. That the students were exhausted by the time curfew sounded at nine, is easily understandable. Late permissions for further study were granted with reluctance. Games on holidays and devotional exercises on feast days were warranted, at least on paper, to provide sufficient relaxation of body and spirit.

Francis entered the college as a "camerist," one who was able to provide out of personal funds the expenses for his tuition and lodgings. Such students, endowed with a sufficiency of funds, enjoyed rooms of their own with one or more roommates. The principal provided them with fuel for their own cooking when youthful appetite acknowledged defeat in the presence of the community meals.

Being a camerist, Francis was allowed, if he cared to avail himself of the privilege, to have a manservant or attendant. The record of his university days seems to indicate that one Michael of Navarre, a type of "hanger-on," fulfilled this office for Francis at times. Meanwhile, sharing their relatively simple room as fellow student was the gentle, delicate-souled young man from Savoy, Peter Faber.

Together Francis and Peter studied through long and frequently difficult hours. Together they would pass the examinations for the degrees of bachelor and licentiate. Looking ahead, we know that Francis was graduated as Master of Arts in his twenty-fifth year. Again, on March 15, 1530, he was awarded the licentiate in philosophy, a degree which gave him the privilege of teaching in public. The year was important to Francis for another, and, to one of his proud disposition, equally satisfying, event. The patents of his nobility of family, requested by him, arrived in Paris.

Peter Faber, with a background of sheep-herding in his native hills, must have smiled quietly to himself. Obviously this proud young Navarrese, Xavier, was a man of fierce family pride.

Xavier himself was well satisfied. As a brilliant young licentiate and master in the College of Beauvais, his philosophy teaching progressed. On the side he studied his theology. The future? Perhaps ecclesiastical rank. Certainly renown as an outstanding university professor. With characteristic *punto d'onore*, that sharp Spanish and Basque "point of honor," no labor was too forbidding if it opened the door to further advancement. When Francis and Peter laid themselves down for rest at night, lying upon the pallets stretched upon the wooden floor in their meagerly furnished quarters, the young professor could not but congratulate himself. Both his teaching of class and his mastering of higher studies advanced. Both were complimented by pupils and instructors.

One's future, of course, was not altogether clear at this stage of progress. Well, it will take care of itself.

Meanwhile, beyond Francis' understanding of its import, an event had taken place which would eventually clarify that future. It would serve to give it shape and, in the process, would change the destiny of the well-regarded Master Francis Xavier.

Wearing a soiled and dust-ridden black cloak and leading a tired donkey, upon whose back was a sack containing a few articles of cheap clothing and some secondhand books, a poor Spanish student came limping into the Latin Quarter in the early spring of 1528.

This foot traveler of thirty-seven, soon to be nicknamed "the Pilgrim" in the Quarter's crowded streets, had just completed a tiresome journey from Alcalá. His name was Ignatius of Loyola.

• [Chapter 4] •

“MY FRIEND, MASTER DON IGNATIUS”

In a letter to his brothers, while he was attending the University of Paris, Francis writes: “What a signal grace of God our Lord it has been for me to have a man so perfect as my friend, Master Don Ignatius.”

This, as history knows, was not Francis’ first reaction to the older man, the ex-soldier turned scholar. Ignatius first was resident of the “dirty, gloomy College of Montaigu” and the two students were, in the beginning, unaware of each other, save perhaps for a passing notice as their paths crossed on the street. The older man, with his beard, his faded clothes bespeaking poverty, and his hobbling gait, was not the sort of person to draw more than a glance from the proud young professor, strong of body and limb.

For him there would not be, as there was in the carefully planned economy of Francis, a horse for occasional riding into the country lanes outside Paris. Nor for him the luxury of a man attendant for “menial” tasks, such as Francis was able to hire. In fact, for the ex-officer turned student, the defender of Pampeluna in 1521, there was neither possibility nor desire for worldly comfort. Ignatius’ prime desire was to finish his grammar courses and then to pass on to philosophy classes at St. Barbara.

For a while Ignatius lodged in the Hospice of St. James as a “poor scholar.” His small funds had been stolen from him but his reliance on St. James, patron of Spain, was sufficient for his needs. Necessary fees would be forthcoming. They did indeed come from the remaining alms he collected in Belgium and

London during vacation periods. With meager funds but shrewd appraisal this man purchased the books which he thumbed almost to tatters, often at night while other students were abroad, busy with the frequent "town and gown" brawls.

The sixteenth was a century in which the written word was beginning to play a role in human affairs, a role which would increase in importance and spread to all levels of society.

It was in May of 1521 that Martin Luther's books were burned publicly in the churchyard of St. Paul's in London. It was more than a mere burning; the Church and State in England, still a Catholic nation, recognized that written pages were weapons for good or evil. Their power over human minds was potent, and Luther was writing paragraphs which basically attacked both the spiritual and the temporal authority. Present at the burning were the officers of the Crown, Lord Chancellor of England and Cardinal Wolsey. Their presence indicated that both the Crown and the Church would bar heresy from England.

In attendance, moreover, was the ambassador of Charles V. In this monarch's realms the Lutheran errors were beginning to manifest their excessive fruits. During the same year, moreover, Henry VIII, in one of the oddments which dot the pages of history, authored his own *Defense of the Seven Sacraments*. The King of France enjoyed the title of "Most Christian King." The King of Aragon was known as the "Catholic King." Henry now knew a fresh — and short-lived — distinction as the King who was "Defender of the Faith." Meantime Luther sneered at Henry's book. "The man," quoth he, "is simply a nit that has not yet turned into a louse. He should be thrown onto the Thomistical dunghill."

In later times there would be men who believed that Ignatius himself wrote the most important book of the sixteenth century, the *Spiritual Exercises*. Of such opinions Ignatius, of course, knew nothing, nor would he have cared very much about them. In his own day, appreciating the power of learning and the written word, his mind took note of what flowed from others' pens, past and present.

Before his injury at Pampeluna, Ignatius had a mind, and a hunger, for the “romantic” way of life: sterling service in the army of his temporal king, sonnets to the lady — imagined or real — of one’s choice, the sweeping elegance of leisure hours at court. For reading and inspiration there were the epics of Amadis of Gaul and the tales of the warrior Roland, and the Cid.

History knows the providential change wrought in the mind and soul of the wounded Ignatius, during the weary hours of his convalescence. When the French, respecting his valorous defense of the ill-garrisoned fortress of Pampeluna, carried the officer with the badly torn leg to his enforced rest at Loyola, a monotonous and painful period ensued. The bone in his leg was, to begin with, badly set by the local surgeons. Permanent lameness was to be the result. Deformity of body, to Ignatius’ mind, was unendurable. Such a blow to his soldiering career was unthinkable. What would the ladies of the court, especially that “lofty one” whom he never identified but to whom he dedicated his sonnets, think of a crippled Ignatius? Damnation and devils take the prospect, and the leg as well. It was not to be tolerated.

“Break it,” he directed with impatient, resolute fortitude, “and reset the bone.”

So it was done. Pain and delirium and subsequent intermittent fever were the result. The initial surgery, leaving a bone of his right leg protruding beneath the knee, was rectified. Now there was hope that once again, resplendent in the trunk hose of the warrior-courtier, he would lend a gracious presence to the court upon his return. The torture of having a piece of bone sawed off, followed by the pains of the iron frame which dragged at the shortened limb, these would be worth the cost.

Almost as difficult as the pains of body in the process were the tedium and monotony of months of convalescence. One at least could while away the time by reading. “Bring me some storybooks,” Ignatius directed, “some tales of heroism and romance.”

“Unfortunately,” it was explained to him, “about all we have left in the castle are some religious books. There’s a fine *Life of Christ*, written by a venerable Carthusian. Would you like that?

Your brother also has some *Lives of the Saints*. Don Martin himself would be glad to read them to you. Or you could read yourself if you'd prefer. Would you like that?"

Ignatius most certainly would not *like* such literary fare. But what else to read? "Give me the books," he ordered.

Devotees of "spiritual reading" have ever since hailed what followed as one of the greatest triumphs of the practice. Through the inquisitive mind of the recovering soldier the printed pages, illumined by a series of grace-wrought inspirations, sent an altogether new chain of thoughts. First a mild wonder, then a mounting curiosity, and ultimately a high resolve. Could it be, Ignatius asked himself, that he had ever truly understood before that, when compared to the greatest of earthly kings and leaders, Jesus Christ dwarfed them from a height marking the distance between mere creatures and a Leader who was also their very God?

The leaders of history? An Alexander who wept when no nations remained for his sword's conquering, and then sank into the narrow kingdom of an unloved grave. A Julius Caesar, colossus of southern European conquest, but a man whose eyes, even as those of the great Egyptian Ptolemies, had long since been "stopped with dust." None of them, to the penetrating mind, to be classed with Jesus Christ, dead for some sixteen centuries but still "alive." The Christ of Jerusalem and Nazareth, of Bethlehem and Bethsaida and Calvary, still quickening human hearts across the world, still entwining human hearts within divine fingers. And still (and herein lay overwhelming appeal for the proud soldiering mind of Ignatius) inviting all high-spirited men of purposeful good will to join with Him in a conquest, not pursued for time but eternity, not of perishable realms but of the sole-abiding kingdom of men's hearts.

The saints, he began to realize with an understanding which few readers of hagiography have achieved, were *the* true soldiers. The Dominics and the Francises and the Pauls of history, these were giants of a conquest which made pathetic in comparison the vain wranglings by kings and earthly generals, spending soldiers' lives and national resources over briefly owned acres of dirt and stone and river. "What these men have done, Ignatius," the insistent

soul within him asserted with growing impatience, “you, too, can attempt — *if* you have the selflessness, the courage to forget Ignatius and ‘put on the Christ.’”

The insistence would not be denied. History knows what “conversion” followed, furthered by an indomitable will which, before and after, knew no half measures. It was conversion, a turning from a way of life, not necessarily sinful but colored with earthly values of judgment and objective, unto the blessed pathway of the counsels.

The story of the years of the founder of the Society of Jesus, with its natural and supernatural qualities, has been told elsewhere. It is enough, in recounting the life of one who was among Loyola’s first companions, to recall but the outlines of that story.

These are familiar. The visions of our Lady. Ignatius disguising himself in new extremes of humility. Inquiries of the Carthusians as to their mode of life. The strong hand copying three hundred pages of holy sayings and the zeal for conversation touching upon sacred things. Announcement of an initial pilgrimage to Jerusalem and a brother’s nervous protest that Ignatius do nothing to bring disgrace to the family name. There is a gentle irony in Don Martin’s request which he could not know.

By mule to the shrine of our Lady at Montserrat. A new wardrobe: sackcloth to his ankles, a girdle of hempen cord, and plaited grass sandals on the feet. A visit to the lofty monastery of the Jagged Rocks and the difficult, lengthy general confession, in the cell of the Hermitage of the Good Thief.

Ignatius tells us himself that, mindful of the high chivalry of Amadis of Gaul, he wished to maintain knightly vigil before the shrine of his new “lofty lady,” the Virgin Mother of Christ. The long nightly vigil of late March, 1522, culminating as he hung up sword and dagger at Mary’s altar in the early hours of the feast of the Annunciation.

There followed the stay in the Hospital of St. Lucy at Manresa. Nursing the sick, praying through long hours of the night, forming decisions for his future work for the kingdom of Christ. The bare floor, the pillow of wood or stone, the water and black bread once a day. The iron chain or the girdle of prickly leaves next

his skin in the way of penance. Little boys hooting at him in the streets with the jeering title of "Father Sack!" Four months of this, laden with the struggle of native pride against violent rebellion, or wrathful retaliation.

And then the cave at Manresa. The bramble-crowded cavern, facing Montserrat, where God would mold his soul until little remained of the former Ignatius and that which was of God poured through the fibers of his being. The little battleground, some nine by four feet, where angels of good and evil wrestled for the soul.

When he goes to Mass the temptations to "throw all over" are recurrent. "How can I endure such a life for forty years?" And the grace-prompted answer: How can a man guarantee himself that he has even another moment of life at any given time? Thereafter the raining torment of scruples which twisted his spirit in uncertainty. Can you be sure (the question leaped upward in his troubled mind) that you have properly repented of even one of your sins? The anguish of scruples, which later made him such a master in resolving those of others, marked a long struggle.

"Where," he cried, "shall I find relief? With me, if I had to seek out a dog's offspring in order to find my cure, I'd do it."

It all added up to unique spiritual experience. In later years his decisions were questioned on occasion. Ignatius would smile quietly and shake his head. "Let it be so," he counseled his questioners, "for *this* is something that I saw at Manresa." There, too, in communion with the Christ to whom he vowed all he had or might become, he wrote the first drafts of the book which will forever be associated with his name: the *Spiritual Exercises*, which would win in subsequent years rare encomiums from all levels of Christian life. Four hundred years after their composition, the Vicar of Christ would hail them in extraordinary words: "They are," declared Pius XI, "an unexcelled font of spirituality, calculated to bring souls to the summit of perfection. For 400 years [these pages] have been foremost in the maturing of sanctity."

It is important, indeed essential, to any study of Francis Xavier to advert to the *Spiritual Exercises*. In his case, as in untold hundreds of thousands of others, their influence in shaping souls

to better, if not new, ways of thought and action is something quite beyond human measurement.

Briefly, the *Exercises* have as their aim a soul's total conversion and dedication to “the completest captain Christ.” If this is the *finis*, the objective, it is also true that the *means* to the end are indicated in the lengthy but inclusive title to the book: “Spiritual Exercises to Conquer Oneself and to Regulate One's Life and to Avoid Coming to a Determination through any Inordinate Affection.”

In the sixteenth century's first quarter, as has been indicated, there was growing need for reform, and especially in “high places.” “Reform” was very much on men's lips. There were not wanting those who vociferously clamored for it, claiming that popes and prelates and kings and councils of state should begin “house cleaning.” To Ignatius the need, such as it was, looked more to the individual than to the house in which he lived. Reform the individual and the households of society would take care of themselves. In his book the reform looks to a most personal renovation as primary.

The historian finds it enlightening, if not at times grim, experience to contrast the century's two differing accents on reform as found in the works of the two men who perhaps best represent the two approaches. Ignatius, with highest possible assessment of the value of the individual for whom Christ's redemptive death was offered, wrote first that he might help the individual mold his own soul in the image of the Christ-life. Martin Luther, persuaded (albeit it was self-persuasion) that the individual was of a nature essentially vitiated and corrupt, called for reformation of society, especially of that social unit men knew as the Church.

He was not above working on the envy of the masses and, more important, the greed of the princes. This “apostle of the pure gospel” issued his *Manifesto to the Christian Nobility of the Country of Germany*. Let the nobles and squires help Church reform by helping clerics dispossess themselves of worldly goods and holdings. Start, moreover, at the top, or at least as near the top as one can reach.

“The pope,” he tells them, “is living at our expense amid such

munificence and splendor that, when riding his horse, he is accompanied by three or four thousand riders mounted on mules. With such startling display he defies all emperors and kings." Nay, more. The wealth to be found in sacristy, the gold treasures of the churches, these are not properly in the hands of the ministers of Christ. The princes saw the point and much of the success of the "reformation" in Germanic lands stemmed from the willingness of prince and noble to reach thieving hands out to grasp the worldly goods of the churchmen in their domains.

Evil, however, breeds evil in kind. The people beheld their princes accumulating wealth taken from the clergy. They, in turn, experiencing the tyranny of the princes, turned upon their masters in fury and reciprocal greed. The result was the terrible Peasants' War which "bathed Germany in blood" in 1525.

In such an age of upheaving values Ignatius would succeed, as few men have succeeded, in putting on "the mind which is in Jesus Christ." Such a mind he would, secondarily and with the operation of the Holy Spirit, succeed in putting into Francis Xavier.

The two men came together in October, 1529. In that month, Ignatius had completed his grammar studies at the Montaigu and was ready to begin his philosophy. He came to St. Barbara and, by felicitous chance, shared the room with Francis Xavier, Peter Faber, and John de Peña.

It was probably the thoughtful Faber, rather than the busy and frequently less patient Master of Arts, who began to learn something of the new roommate's background. Although we do not know how much of it Ignatius was willing to discuss at the time, Peter Faber was quick to sense the presence of one of God's men in their midst.

It had been a varied background. The year of inward struggle at Manresa and a pilgrimage that followed to the Holy Land. Ignatius' plan was to dwell near the Holy Sepulchre and preach conversion to the Turks and infidels. Diplomatic reasons curtailed his plan and his stay, and he returned to Spain by way of Venice. When he read in the Gospel the words "And they understood none of these things," he knew with sudden realization that, if he planned to achieve great things in the service of the Master,

he needed first the fundament of complete education. Periods of tutoring in Latin follow in Barcelona. With little boys he sits on hard benches in the lowest forms to learn the rudiments of language and catechism. Some preaching in the time left over after his studies. On to Cardinal Ximénes' university at Alcalá where, too eager, his initial studies advanced not at all. On to Salamanca and the slanders of enemies who resented his preaching and teaching. A hearing and acquittal from charges of pernicious doctrine. In Paris, at the College of Montaigu, to begin anew his desired studies — and trouble in the college because some youths, prompted by contact with Ignatius, suddenly decide to sell all and make themselves his disciples.

“A strange fellow, is he not?” Francis could ask Peter when their roommate was absent. “What do you make of him?”

One may hazard a guess that the young Faber, quick to sense the differences between Ignatius and Francis, might well have framed in his mind the unspoken question in return: Rather, Francis, I'm wondering what he will make of *you*.

〔 Chapter 5 〕

“FRANCIS, WHAT WILL IT PROFIT YOU...?”

The young Francis Xavier found Ignatius “difficult.”

At first he undertook to coach in his study this somewhat backward student of thirty-seven. Impatient of the resultant slow progress, Francis turned the work over to Faber. The successful young professor wondered what lay ahead for this Spanish nobleman and ex-soldier turned student. Ignatius was presenting, when he found the time, spiritual conferences to fellow students at St. Barbara. Faculty members were unable to grasp that a man, with threadbare clothes and but recently arrived from the low grammar classes at Montaigu, could possibly be a trusted spiritual adviser to the young men of the college. Formal complaint was made to Govea, the principal of St. Barbara.

“This man,” the complaint said, “is going too far. He is not a priest and yet gives spiritual lectures. What might not be feared when already there has been too much heresy infecting academic circles?”

The danger of heresy was not remote. Govea, a brilliant Portuguese scholar, was concerned. The emphasis, given by some minds tinged with Renaissance ideas, to the new “humanism” was dangerous. “To humanize,” ran the saying, “is to Lutheranize.” In St. Barbara, teaching and studying at the same time as Francis, was Calvin, the future heresiarch of Geneva. Calvin so worked upon the mind of his own professor, Cordier, that the latter in 1528 united himself to the group known as the “Reformers.”

Now, not long afterward, Govea has to deal with Ignatius.

If deemed guilty of presumptive practice, Ignatius would be subjected to the ordeal called the “public scourging,” a routine bestowed upon refractory students in the dining hall, in which the culprit was made to run the gauntlet between a double row of masters who laid on his bare shoulders with a will. Meanwhile, behind their cane-wielding masters, the students jeered with gusto.

Consider the reaction of Ignatius when he learned that he had been “turned in” to the principal. By this time, as students of Loyola’s life know, he was no mere novice in the spiritual life.

His principle was one ordinarily of self-conquest and the ready acceptance of mortification. This welcome of suffering, however, with a saint is usually conditioned and modified with considerations of prudence. Ignatius knew the bad effect upon the young men whose characters he was already helping mold should he be submitted to the gauntlet. For himself he had established a principle of self-subjugation. “Ass!” he told himself frequently. “It is hard for you to kick against the goad. But forward, or I will drag you on!”

This punishment of *La Salle*, however, would not be accepted. Ignatius knew he was undeserving of it. He realized that his informant had approached the principal partly because of a general dislike he had taken toward Ignatius, partly because he believed Ignatius’ spare-time nursing of the plague-stricken was proving a danger to St. Barbara students. In any event a public beating was neither a solution nor a requisite of justice.

Ignatius went to the office of Govea. The beating was cancelled. The reaction of Govea could only be guessed at, but the guessers sensed that somehow the “Pilgrim” had made a great impression on the head of the college.

Francis Xavier must have been, whether he would or not, impressed with the event. What does one make of this man Ignatius? History does not record the actual moment when Ignatius first indicated, by a passing word perhaps, his interest in the plans and indeed in the character of the brilliant young professor. It was not long, however, after following his arrival at St. Barbara.

“Here,” Loyola could say to himself, or perhaps to his intimate friend Peter Faber, “is a young man of remarkable talent.

"I, myself, am a man with a plan for the future, and in that future the plan will unfold itself. By my coming to Paris, by leaving behind me Alcalá and Salamanca, I have indicated that my work will launch itself in what men would call 'the center' of things. Paris is, in a sense, the world. Here I will find my associates and they will be men with talent, with ambition, and with nothing provincial in their vision. Such a one, I believe, will be this Francis.

"Right now Francis cannot understand me. It's easy to see that a middle-aged fellow like myself, a man who isn't above begging an alms and sweeping corridors for a pittance, should prove distasteful to one who makes so much of elegance, of family position, and of intellectual rank. In the long run this may work unto good, this pride of place and person — unto Francis' good, and mine as well. But we shall see. The Spaniard has before this known how to approach a Basque stronghold."

As the event was to prove, the stronghold of Francis' reserve was to capitulate. In the capitulation, nonetheless, there was victory for Francis himself. God, as has been truly said, is not in the whirlwind; nor was Ignatius' victory in winning Xavier to his cause a matter of blustering, shouting, or lengthy harangue.

Francis' yielding, slow to be achieved, was the result of the older man's quiet return, again and again in successive conversations, to the deep-founded Catholic instincts which Francis received in Navarre and which underlay his years in Paris. The finest inheritance Don Juan and Doña Maria gave their son was a character fashioned in the Faith and instinct with its basic values.

"Where will all this study lead you, Francis? A professorship, a position in the Church, an easy way of life marked with honor and men's indifferent acclaim? A pathway of 'gracious living' for the relatively few short years which are any man's span, and then what follows after? A little grave to mark the end of what one might, even with courtesy and with no reproach, call a little life? Is this to be the sum of it all, Francis?"

Is it not enough?

It is enough, indeed. One saves one's soul, perhaps. One does not further the cause of evil, but does one really do much to

advance the cause of good? But what, Francis — and here's the *basic* consideration — what will it profit you if you win all earthly honors *if*, in the process of their pursuit, you should suffer the loss of your immortal soul? Pride can be a consuming master. Sensuality can overthrow a man and his soul's salvation. Each man must be master of himself, Francis. But how many truly achieve this mastery?

One can say, with all reverence, that Ignatius looked upon this young man and “found him good.” The practiced power of observation, which belonged to Ignatius and later made him famous as a judge of men and environment, could see that it was not an easy matter to be good in the Latin Quarter at that time.

Reference has been made to the street brawling, the frequentation of taverns, and the generally dismal round of many students' escape from discipline. With the ardor of his southern nature, strong in body and with young manhood's physical zest, Francis might have fallen into excesses. That he did not has been remarked by all his biographers.

In the backwaters of the Latin Quarter lay the houses devoted to immorality. These found among their patrons certain students and certain professors. Francis himself declared that the moral atmosphere of the university was shocking and that some of his fellow students contributed to the general laxity. He, himself, went out upon occasion with students who frequently gave way to vice. Often cited is one of Francis' professors who succumbed to a vicious disease, the result of his indulgence in evil.

It would be gratifying at this point to say that Francis' preservation of his innocence was due to the fact that his chastity was as a burning and purifying flame, so consuming his concupiscence that, as was true of some saints, his nature was never troubled by the stronger promptings to evil. Without going into any hazardous estimate of how strong his chastity was at this particular period, we know from Francis himself that his continued abstinence was due principally to a salutary fear.

Twenty years later he confided in Gaspard Coelho, Vicar of Meliapor in India, that this had been the case. And Coelho wrote shortly after the apostle's death: “Concerning the lives of the

students, Francis told me that both they and their teachers were most immoral. And that at night the students frequently went out from the college with a professor and took Francis with them. On the other hand his chastity had remained unbroken until the hour when he gave me these confidences."

Francis was a young man and would have said of himself that he was neither much better nor much worse than the next fellow. It is true that his proud nature, averse toward any sordidness of behavior, coupled with his Catholic instincts founded in recollections of the sacred home life which he had but recently left, would have done much to preserve him in the way of innocence.

Environment can be strong, however, in these matters. When one's youthful fellow students, even one's professors, are "sowing wild oats," fortified with one another's jesting reassurances that there is "little harm" done, it is not easy for a young man to withhold himself. Especially for a long period.

Father Martindale believes that we cannot honestly omit what, with a view to the Saint's development, is the most important point of all — that not supernatural convictions, or even human self-esteem kept him from sin, but salutary fear of the appalling maladies so prevalent around him.

Preserve his youthful innocence he did. Peter Faber understood, we learn, the difficulties Francis experienced in all of this. Francis, in turn, was to thank providence for giving him the angelic Faber for a roommate at a time when such a one was needed for both example and encouragement. It is agreeable to note that before he died, Francis himself would be the one to place the name of the most lovable Peter Faber in the Litany of the Saints.

It is perfectly proper to believe that the young Xavier's devotion to the Blessed Virgin had much to do with his continuing innocence of soul. Anticipating somewhat, it can be said that Francis' temptations were strong in nature, even in later years. It is this which enhances the magnitude of his spirit and heightens the victories, successive as they were, over the appeal of evil.

Some years afterward in Rome, Simon Rodriguez, while sharing a room with Francis, beheld the latter's struggles, even while asleep, with some inward temptation which made the sleeper toss upon

his bed, his face purpled with the violence of inward conflict. Later, Francis confided to Rodriguez the vicious nature of the temptation thrust upon him by the evil spirit and the anguish of the combat wherein the attack was repulsed. Such episodes are worthy of notice in the life of one who, at Goa and other sin-ridden cities of the Orient, would come to grips with vice and evil in tangible form.

Clearly, then, the shrewd, observant mind of Ignatius sensed the presence of a young professor whose Catholic soul was something deserving study and, if it would be received, the offer of spiritual direction.

Long were the conversations, thoughtful and at times marked by sharp expression of differing opinions, between Loyola and Xavier. The years were passing and there was, Ignatius knew, no point in pressing his advantage too far nor too rapidly. In the end (who could tell?) he might not succeed in winning this Xavier to his cause. What of that? With Cyrano, Ignatius would say, “A man does not fight merely to win.” One can win much even when the ultimate objective is not attained.

The Xavier family difficulties, coupled with Francis' tendency to live to the limit, and even beyond, of his slender means, resulted in financial “crises,” not unfamiliar today in students' lives. Francis maintained, as fitting his position, his manservant and his horse. At best one can say his forte did not lie in the matter of balancing a personal budget. In 1528 the Xavier family felt it would be necessary to call him home before he received his bachelor's degree. His sister Madalena, oddly enough, was the one who insisted this not be done. She was abbess of the Poor Clares at Gandia. Perhaps such a community's indifference to real or imagined financial ills prompted her letter home, insisting: “Do all that you are able to continue Francis' studies, because I have a strong belief he will eventually be an outstanding servant of God and a pillar of the Church.”

And so Francis continued through the successive steps of his university career. In 1529 he and Peter completed their baccalaureate work. In 1530 Francis was awarded the Master's degree. Francis could now wear the “bonnet” of the professor. The recently

arrived Ignatius was an "odd fellow," neither more nor less. He proved, not long afterward, an ally when Francis' funds ran out. Francis had been spending his meager allowance particularly upon the verification of the family's right to "nobility." Suddenly his purse, as not infrequently happens in the case of young professors whose extracurricular activities are too much pursued, was practically empty. In this distasteful moment he was forced to accept, as a loan of course, some coins Ignatius had secured by his begging.

Fortunately the incident did not breed, as often happens, a resentment, unspoken but undeniable, on the part of the borrower toward the lender. Ignatius, sensing Francis' need for continued extra income, gathered pupils whose fees would help the professor's budget. Don Francisco Xavier could now, with lighter mind, appear as not only the handsome but the comfortably fixed Professor of Philosophy in the College Dormans-Beauvais.

Meanwhile Ignatius continued to gather young men for discussion of matter pertaining to religion and salvation. Frequent confession and the reception of the Eucharist were urged upon these eager disciples. Many others, indeed, frowned upon the practice of student "lecturing" to students. Word had come that Ignatius had experienced trouble with the Inquisition in his own land of Spain. He had, moreover, been writing a book. Imagine, a book by such as he! No sense in inquiring into it. It's got to do with religion, of course, but who ever gets a chance to read it?

These critics did not know the story whose chapters told of wounding at Pampeluna, the year's stay in a period of "conversion" and enlightenment at Manresa and Montserrat, and the campaign whose outlines continued to grow in Ignatius' mind.

When he left Manresa the concept of his Company of Jesus had not yet been established in his mind. Ignatius' prime concern at Manresa, in fact through all his years, was saving his own soul. And his zeal prompted him to assist others in doing the same. It was only gradually, as the years of study went on, in both Spain and France, that the Company concept took shape in his mind. "The Society, however," it has been said, "was incipient in all that he did in the days following Manresa."

Ignatius sympathized upon learning of the death of Francis'

mother. The good, the patient Doña Maria died at the family home in July, 1529. Certain folk, whose piety of imagination outdistanced their historical accuracy, circulated for many years a charming, although quite untrue, story designed to enhance Francis Xavier's reputation for sanctity.

“Dear Francis,” they explained, “was of such mortified disposition that, passing near the ancestral home of Xavier while setting forth upon his now famous missionary travels, he denied himself the consolation of a final visit to his dear mother.” Truth to tell, the dear mother had been dead a goodly number of years when Francis set about his preparations to leave Europe.

It took Ignatius some three years of intermittent discussion before Francis knew that the other, a man of no athletics and a little “dog Latin,” had succeeded in moving, if not shaking, the foundations of his soul. Aristotle's philosophy was becoming of less paramount importance in Francis' everyday planning. The thoughts of Christ and His kingdom upon earth, and the needs of that kingdom, these became more pressing.

As in the prelude to so many decisions of major importance to the individual, numerous influences were at work. Xavier knew himself to be an independent adult. His mother was dead and his brothers married. He was indeed ready to carve for himself a way of life. As late as February, 1531, Francis had sent word to his brothers to secure for him, in some definite legal document, the warrant of his nobility. This was done and the document duly arrived. By the time, long afterward, the document, duly attested, reached Paris, it was too late. Francis had made his surrender to Ignatius.

The influence of Peter Faber, once a shepherd of Savoy and one who had taken a vow of chastity in youth, was strong upon Francis. Faber was a young man of exquisite tenderness and a deep sympathy which could extend pity to men of the stamp of Luther and Henry VIII. Simon Rodriguez, another member of the Company of Ignatius, speaks of him with fraternal admiration. “In dealing with others,” he says, “Peter Faber possessed an unusual and delightful sweetness and grace of a sort I have never encountered in anyone else. By methods beyond my knowledge he

won others as friends, stole almost unnoticed into their souls in such wise that, by example and his slow peasant tongue, he lit in them all a burning love of God."

Ignatius' siege of Francis' soul was a matter of about three years. *What will it profit you, Francis?* The question was recurrent. Slowly, but inexorably, there grew in Francis' mind a greater understanding of the character of the man Ignatius.

The mind of the professor was not slow to sense the simplicity, that rare simplicity which reduces problems to their essentials, which marked Ignatius' mind. Ignatius was one who envisioned nothing less than the conquest of all the world for Christ. The extension of this kingdom was so important that nothing, no hardship nor effort, was too great to attain it. The underlying *motif* of the conquest was the search for "the greater honor and glory of God." Those following Loyola, Francis understood, must communicate their zealous fire to all within reach. Herein again was the note of simplicity, a reasonableness of mind which is the beginning of wisdom.

Nor was the mistake made of envisioning the work ahead in terms of the particular, the national, or the provincial. The entire world was the target. Germany, for instance, was not specified as a battlefield although the reformers' work there was proving disastrous to the Church. Later, indeed, Germany would prove a combat area, but so would every area in the world where the greater glory of God could be realized in furthering the kingdom of Christ. After the subsequent establishment of his Company, Ignatius found freedom for this unlimited pursuit in the Company's distinct fourth Vow of Obedience to the Roman Pontiff. With its sanctioning by the Holy See, the door was open for a society of professional couriers of the Catholic faith, a door through which members could go to "the ends of the earth" upon their mission.

Xavier would be the foremost exemplar of those traveling apostles. With amusement he looked back, during the years of his phenomenal journeyings in the Orient, to the "official recognition of the Xavier family rank" tendered in 1535. And to the declaration in the following year by the *Corte-mayor* of Pampeluna: "In the name of Charles V, that Don Francisco de Jassu y Xavier

is hidalgo of noble and gentle birth, according to the four stems of his paternal and maternal genealogy.”

The crisis, if one can use the word, in Francis’ “conversion” occurred in the year 1533. In that year Peter Faber returned to his Switzerland for seven months, leaving Ignatius and Francis alone together.

“Francis,” Ignatius said to his roommate, “if one lived only to die and did not live for eternity, I would profess that your position hitherto has been better than mine. Then it would be wise for a man to enjoy his position amidst the ease of this life’s pleasures. I would be a fool to advise casting them aside. But if this short way of earthly existence is simply a journey to an immortal life in eternity with God, then you yourself must weigh life’s open avenues with the measuring rod of time and eternity. Earthly happiness is a brittle thing of glass. For one with your cast of mind and heart, is it sufficient? Or are you not, with the God-given fire within you which reaches for the highest achievement, seeking something in your life which will be worthy of eternity? All of this earth’s beauty, all of its happiness, are but a drop in comparison with the limitless ocean of Christ’s love and the joys reserved for those who seize upon that love, here and hereafter.”

Francis pondered. Before him was the image of Peter Faber, already devoted to Ignatius. Francis knew of Diego Laynez and Alfonso Salmerón, two greathearted youths who had followed Ignatius from Alcalá to Paris. These young men already gave indication that they would become eager disciples of Ignatius in whatever plans he might offer them. There was, too, the wandering scholar, Nicholas, the student so poor that he owned not even a family name. His surname Bobadilla, therefore, was borrowed from the small village of Valencia where his generous self was born. As the months of decision passed, Francis felt perhaps a peculiar sympathy for one Jerome Nadal, twenty-seven years old and from Palma in Majorca. “Your plans,” Nadal told Ignatius, “are not for me; even if your teaching is orthodox, there’ll be trouble, I fear, and we might all wind up in the hands of the Inquisition.” Ten years later Jerome Nadal fell, not into the hands of the

inquisitors, but into the hands of Ignatius and gave himself unreservedly to the cause. Nadal, indeed, became Ignatius' "second self," and foremost in relaying the spirit of the founder to the members of the entire Society of Jesus.

In the important seven months, before Faber's return in early 1534, much took place. Francis Xavier was a "new man" upon their completion. Ecclesiastical and scholastic preferment were no longer his ambition. His newly born desire for self-effacement resulted at first in a desire to abandon his immediate teaching functions. He was persuaded to continue them for a time. In what time remained from classroom work, Francis devoted himself to prayer, to penance, to the cultivation of a spirit of religious poverty. He dismissed his manservant and discarded his horse. In the seven-month period another family tie came to its end with the death of his devoted sister, the Abbess Madalena.

This sister, who understood her brilliant younger brother so well, had offered her life to God in Francis' behalf. Her work was completed. History records that during her death agony, Madalena accepted her sufferings for others, especially another sister. Her calmness of feature scarcely changed although, afterward, it was discovered that the effort to prevent cries of pain caused the dying woman to bite through her tongue in several places.

Peter Faber was overjoyed upon his return to St. Barbara to learn of the progress of Francis. The latter was quick to tell how Ignatius had been taking him to weekly confession and Communion in the Carthusian church near the Porte St. Jacques. During this third decade of the century, Loyola was to win other young men to closer union with Christ. Some would join the ranks led by Ignatius. Others would try the new way of life and then turn aside.

Ignatius introduced almost all of these aspirants for a better way of life to the *Spiritual Exercises*. He was himself still at work upon the book's first draft. In conducting others through their pages and prescribed spiritual activities, the author learned much about their effective presentation. Only the angels have record of what Ignatius learned as he took Francis Xavier, step by step, through the *Exercises* in September of 1534. To both men the progress must have been a rewarding experience.

On the one side stood Loyola, a man whose spiritual direction of others is celebrated in religious history. On the other was a generous and youthful soul, high in ambition which awaited proper direction, a nature that responded as though by instinct to Ignatius' principle: "To give and not count the cost, to fight and not heed the wounds, to work and seek not for reward."

As the spring of 1534 came on, Faber had cause for inward rejoicing. Ignatius, whom he considered his father in God, received his Master of Arts at Easter. Later Ignatius would tell his sons that during studies at Paris he was strongly assailed by the temptation to give them up. One may well believe that the Prince of Darkness was about the business of stopping, at any cost, the emergence of a new light which would illumine, directly and indirectly, the pathway of the Church in the sixteenth and subsequent centuries. Ignatius, however, put aside the temptations to a comfortable dismissal of studies even as at Manresa he overcame the consoling thoughts which would distract him from needed sleep.

Faber rejoiced in Ignatius' success in completion of studies. With his joy was the added happiness that, at long last, his beloved Francis knelt at Ignatius' feet. The springtime of that year was bright with light and warmth for all three men. No matter what long winters might lie ahead, all three gave thanks to God for the brightness and the promise of the present hour.

[Chapter 6]

THE GOOD COMPANIONS

Twelve Apostles, we are told, set about changing the face of religious history in the first months of Christianity. There is a reflection, faint indeed but nonetheless discernible, in an event that took place on the morning of the feast of Mary's Assumption, 1534. Francis Xavier was a member of a small but determined band of seven men who participated in the event, which is of major moment in the history of Europe and the Church.

Ignatius Loyola, with six companions, went at daybreak to the rarely used chapel of Montmartre. Halfway up the slope the little chapel opened its doors to one priest, Peter Faber, who had been ordained the month before, and six others who had a purpose if ever men had one.

Francis and the companions crossed the river from the Latin Quarter, moved swiftly through narrow streets to the chapel. It was a crypt chapel to an ancient basilica where, according to tradition, St. Denis was wont to offer Mass and where he was killed for his faith.

Parisians, most of whom were still abed, knew nothing of the event transpiring in obscure silence. Following Ignatius' direction, Faber offered the Sacrifice of the Mass and then Loyola and his sons pronounced the first vows of the nascent Company, or Society, of Jesus: perpetual poverty and chastity. The ardent group also bound themselves to travel to Jerusalem. If this should prove impossible, they would take willingly any assignment given them by Christ's Vicar. And this "for the greater glory of God."

It would be futile to attempt to grasp the joy filling the soul of Francis Xavier on this sun-washed and grace-filled morning. Happiness flooded the group. The remainder of the day was spent, in a gentle and fraternal picnic, on the hill of Montmartre. Francis listened, as did the others, to the plans and the instructions of Ignatius. The leader stood in relation to his chosen followers not so much as authoritative director as an elder brother. Brotherly musketeers in a new crusade, a project whose development remained as yet dimly uncertain, all seven men rejoiced to have at least united in practical purpose for the extension of Christ's kingdom upon earth.

Francis asked himself what would the coming years bring to him. His complete dedication of self occurred upon a day sacred to his Blessed Mother. She, whom he first knew and loved in youthful Navarrese days, would protect and inspire him in his work for her Son. All would be well.

"At least two years more," Ignatius told his followers, "must be devoted to studies and to prayer and penance. Theological knowledge is of paramount importance and this all must acquire. Meanwhile, each year we will come for a renewal of our vows to Montmartre."

It was a simple beginning and a quiet one. Its subsequent importance is recorded by history. Both heretic and schismatic might have smiled indulgently at the Montmartre pledging and resolve. A handful of pious men whose private devotion, unless it were watched, might lead to public insanity. In this post-Renaissance era one encountered many rash zealots about to set the world on fire—or so they believed, these overeager zealots. Leave them alone.

With his learning, Francis might have reminded any who would have criticized or disdained of a cardinal religious principle: If a "religious" undertaking is of God, it will prosper; if not, it is destined to fall of its own weight.

Following the first profession at Montmartre, Francis made a concentrated and formal progress through the *Spiritual Exercises*. Even as the other first companions of Ignatius (Faber, Bobadilla, Rodriguez, Laynez, and Salmerón), Francis understood that the

Exercises were to be the group's manual of arms, the *vade mecum* and the spiritual fountain whence all would draw the image of the Christ. They would "put on the Christ" as they found Him in the *Exercises*. To do this selflessly, Francis knew, no half measures were possible nor, having made choice, would he permit any further indulgence of self.

His penances were severe. Ignatius, however, would not permit excess of mortification, for such would hinder, not further, the work of present and future. It was Francis' desire to "make reparation," by extreme penance, for his earlier vanities and athleticism.

The companions did not form a community, living together. Each pursued his present scholastic schedule. The common bond, uniting all members, was the 1534 vow profession. In frequent visits together, in long conversations, and by a simple rule of life, the religious spirit was fostered and encouraged. Emphasis was given daily meditation, the daily examination of conscience, and confession and Communion each week.

As the new scholastic semester began Ignatius resumed his study of theology under the direction of the Dominicans in the *Rue Saint Jacques*. Whenever possible he instructed his first companions in the spirit of his emerging plan.

Basic in Ignatius' spiritual "philosophy" was insistence upon the essential goodness—despite weakness stemming from original sin—in the nature of man. Certain reformers were teaching that man's nature was essentially corrupt, incapable of good action. With St. Thomas, Ignatius taught that man's nature remains good. Thus one finds stress upon natural activities, although always the sheerly natural is to be supernaturalized. With Francis Xavier the record of his life presents a succession of natural activity illumined and sanctified by purity of intention and by unflinching advertence to the abiding, sustaining "presence of God."

Of practical import, in the *Exercises* as Francis considered them under the masterful direction of Ignatius, was the relative positions of the motives of *love* and *fear* in the service of God.

Later, in one of the rules Ignatius gave his Company, the Jesuit founder makes explicit his understanding of the *salutary* fear of

the Lord, while simultaneously according primacy of motive to love itself: "Although it is above all things praiseworthy greatly to serve God our Lord out of pure love, yet we ought much to praise the fear of His divine Majesty, because not only is filial fear a sacred and most holy thing, but even servile fear, when a man does not rise to anything better and more useful, is of great help to him to escape mortal sin. And, after he has escaped it, he easily attains to filial fear, which is altogether acceptable and pleasing to God our Lord, because it is inseparable from divine Love."

This balance of mind, reflected in such distinctions, is worth notice in our story of Francis. The young Xavier, when making the *Exercises*, was having his period of spiritual formation. The impact of the teaching of Ignatius upon the open, impressionable mind of his zealous "convert" was profound.

Accordingly, Francis was grounded by his director in the utterly common-sense approach to matters of time and eternity which marks the *Exercises*. Neither Ignatius, nor any of his sons, could or would subscribe to an unbalanced religious judgment which, for instance, would condemn a salutary fear of the Lord. The date was not far distant when the Council of Trent would anathematize the sage of Wittenberg's contention that "the fear of hell, through which we have recourse to the mercy of God in repentance for our sins or because of which we avoid sin, is a sin itself and makes us even greater sinners."

If one can so speak, some of the "reformers" had sin on the brain. Meantime others, and Francis was included among them, brought intelligent Catholic instinct to bear upon considerations of good and evil. Such minds could have no traffic with the Lutheran error that all affection for our own welfare is disordered affection, one which grace should destroy. St. Thomas, whose metaphysic underlies much of Ignatius' spiritual direction, insists that man's natural desire for personal happiness is *not* a disordered thing. Rather it is already *initialiter* subordinated to God Himself.

The *formative* years of Francis Xavier were of inestimable value in the molding of the future apostle and future provincial of

the Province of India. No one gives what he has not. Much that would be given by Francis himself, as superior and teacher and priestly missionary, was acquired under the tutelage of Ignatius during the years they spent together in Paris.

Francis was shrewd and quick to learn. He needed no heavenly inspiration to tell him of the evil of the attachment of clerics to this world's honors and riches. Nor that the burden of the wealth of the Church, in certain areas and times, was a killing weight. Middle Age organization had at times made princes of prelates. Pagan thought of Renaissance days had corrupted the morals of certain professed followers and even teachers of the Christian way.

In the *Spiritual Exercises*, on the other hand, there was a *leveling*, an assessment of things both temporal and eternal. The tendency in the considerations for meditation is rather upon a poverty of spirit, promising with divine warrant the possession of the kingdom of God. Contempt for worldly honors meant a new, but welcome, pathway for the hitherto proud young Navarrese professor. The two central considerations of the *Exercises* appealed most to Francis Xavier. These meditations, with their fresh originality, were most typical of their author: the meditations upon the "Kingdom of Christ" and the "Two Standards." They have for their conclusion no other way than that of following the divine Leader in poverty, in humiliation, and in love-founded imitation.

The life of Christ ever has as primary source the Scriptures. No adapter, no version, has ever improved upon the account of the sacred writers. The Bible remains in every age the source *par excellence*. It remains equally true that the Scriptures need an authoritative voice for their correct interpretation.

Witness two men at work on the sacred writings in the sixteenth century. Francis Xavier, familiar with the Church's traditional exegesis of the sacred writings, was drawing from chapter and verse the image of the Christ and His counseled way of life. Always present to his mind was the authoritative interpretation of the Mother Church. Luther, on the other hand, balked at traditional Church interpretation. Further, he rejected the Church's authority in scriptural matters and, one of the first true Protestants, insisted upon his subjective judgment as the norm.

"Unless my teachings," he protested, "can be shown to be false from the Scriptures and reason — for I believe in neither the Pope nor in the councils alone, who without a doubt have erred and involved themselves in contradictions in the past — I am bound by the texts which I have brought with me [to Worms], and my conscience is the slave of the word of God."

It listened well, at least to certain ears. Heretics have a way with language in those cases where they have won a popular following. Francis Xavier, meantime, was not weaving words. Under the direction of Loyola he was weaving the threads of the Christ-life into the natural fibers of his great soul.

"Ignatian obedience" has become a type of byword in the history of religious orders. To some the concept denotes a quick advertence to the religious superior's command but withal an obedience tinged with something slavish. To the sons of Ignatius, from the days of Montmartre to the present, the phrase connotes that prompt alertness to the will of God as expressed in the directive of the religious superior. Nor has it ever been interpreted, by Jesuits or students of religious life, to mean that the Almighty necessarily endorses the "wisdom" of the superior concerned. The superior might even be, as Ignatius outlines in his classic *Letter On Obedience*, wanting in wisdom, in practicality, or in downright "common sense." What matters is that God sanctions the directive of the superior, for in all such instances the superior has, in virtue of his office, that authority which ultimately comes from God Himself.

Francis, ready for complete but rational acceptance of the religious way of life, understood this. Nor, let it be said, is there anything esoteric in understanding the matter. The practical consequences might be difficult, considering the weakness of human nature and the powerful drive of selfish human nature. In the mind, however, there is not much difficulty in grasping that all superiors, legitimately enjoying office, have authority from God. Francis Xavier was a man of keen intellect. It would, indeed, have been surprising if he had *not* understood this principle of obedient action.

The position of the religious superior toward his subjects was

ever clear in Francis' mind. Long years later, when there was question of Simon Rodriguez' coming to join him, even perhaps in the role of superior, Francis writes to him: "If, indeed, the strength of your body is equal to that of your spirit, your arrival will be most welcome. This should always be the case whenever Father Ignatius advises you to a course of action, for he is our Father and we should obey him. Never should we even budge ourselves without his directives and his advice. If, then, you should come, with what joy I shall range myself beneath your obedience!"

Much was learned in Paris which would serve Francis well in his later years of self-direction. Ignatius trained his neophyte well, moreover, in the *modus* of directing and caring for others. The spirit of Christlike kindness and understanding, together with necessary firmness, was native to Loyola.

"The superior should know," he wrote in his *Constitutiones*, IX, 2, respecting the General of the Society, "how to join benignity and kindness to the necessary rectitude and severity. Moreover, without allowing himself to be turned aside from what he has judged to be more pleasing to God our Lord, he should show compassion to his sons so that the very ones who are reprovèd and corrected will recognize, despite the pain felt by nature, that he has done his duty according to God and with charity."

Under such a large-souled director Francis moved forward in the early days of his religious life. Meantime Ignatius was indicating to the companions what he had "judged to be more pleasing to God."

The incipient Company would take its stand, when necessary, against the new attacks thrown at the Mother Church. Francis Xavier was sufficiently educated to know that Europe should not surrender the fruit of fifteen centuries of thinking and devotion. Nor was he deceived by appeals to "return to the pure Gospel." Let men of the stamp of Erasmus be satisfied with a vague, nebulous sort of Christianity which rejected all formalism. The day would come, rather soon, when the work of the scholastics, in which Erasmus could see only pedantic bickering over intellectual "trifles," would flower and reach its peak in the noteworthy definitions of the Council of Trent. Therein would emerge the

proof that years of labor, in the scholastic evolution of dogma, had not been spent in vain.

Ignatius himself was obliged to return to Spain in 1535. Before his departure from Paris, the companions agreed that all would meet in Venice in Lent of 1537. The leader of the group had finished but eighteen months of his theological studies. Long-practiced austerities and fasts had so weakened his stomach that physicians told Ignatius he needed, more than anything else, a return to his "native air." There was an additional compelling reason for revisiting Spain: Ignatius could visit the homes of his Paris disciples. As their representative he could, moreover, arrange their affairs at home so as to leave them free for travels and labors ahead. In the springtime he left the environs of Paris, mounted on a small pony. He would travel to Spain, then on to Italy. And all would meet together in Venice.

Francis entrusted to Ignatius a letter for his brother Juan. He had learned that certain men, wishing ill to Francis and Ignatius, had accused the companions of faults, among them heresy. Francis makes a point of the falsity of these reports in the letter Ignatius was able to deliver personally to Juan.

"I give you my most solemn assurance of honor," the letter tells Juan, "that in all my life I will never be capable of paying off my debt to Ignatius: for having assisted me with funds, with friends, and for having removed me from certain bad companions whose character I, in my inexperience, did not recognize. . . . And so I entreat you to give him such welcome as you would to me. . . . Take my word for it, if this Ignatius were such a man as others have reported to you, he would not have come to your home to put himself in your hands. . . . You will have much profit from his advice and his conversations. . . . Again, I beg of you, fail not in all of this but, for my sake, believe all Ignatius will report of me even as you would credit it if I myself were speaking with you, face to face."

Francis' brothers were not entirely pleased with the information given them by Ignatius concerning their young brother's plans for the future. Mention has already been made of the long-delayed response to the letter Francis sent Michael and Juan in

1531. In that letter, the ambitious young student sought for legal documentation of the family patent to nobility. The brothers could now regret their dilatoriness. Hastily the document was secured, as we have noted, and sent to Paris. Perhaps it would change the mind of Francis. Perhaps his noble ambitions would be resumed.

Francis smiled when the document arrived. It was foreign to his soul, fresh from the self-effacement planted in his mind and heart by the *Exercises*.

A little more time remained for the companions in Paris, while their father in God was traveling from Spain to Italy. Francis and his confreres did not consider themselves as a religious order. Nor had their vows at Montmartre included the vow of obedience. Later, too, would come the formal organization, the approval of the Holy See, which would be won not without difficulty.

The fortunes of war, in Navarre in earlier days, had determined much of the Xavier fortunes in Francis' youth. Now, about to proceed in a new way of life, war's fortunes affected his plans again. And also those of his Paris companions in God. War broke out between Emperor Charles V and Francis I of France. The order was given that all Spaniards must leave Paris and there was much minor upheaval throughout the Latin Quarter. Francis and his companions decided to leave the capital city at once, although it was sooner than their plans called for.

They departed on the feast of All Saints, 1536. Traveling as poor pilgrims, the men walked the rough French roads and lanes. No longer was there a horse for Francis Xavier. A kit with a few books was slung across the rough cloth of the cloak covering his back. His rosary hung suspended about his neck. Secretly, he had tied cords tightly about his legs and arms, that even on his journeyings he might offer penance. The story is told how these cords became so imbedded in his flesh that inflammation and the beginnings of infection set in, and that a doctor doubted his recovery. Thereafter, following the prayers of his companions, the cords fell out during the night, the flesh healed itself, and soon all were walking the roads once again.

"We meditated on the life of our Lord," Francis wrote later. "We sang hymns and psalms, and discussed religion."

It was an unusual progress. The pilgrims were no merry-makers moving gaily along some Chaucerian highway, but men with a purpose and kindling, by conversation and prayer, the flames of love for God within themselves. The three priests offered Mass each morning. Each day was sanctified by the morning reception of the Eucharist. The winter months, as they moved across Lorraine, were a series of bouts with piercing cold and driving snows. To suspicious French soldiers, stopping them on the road, they explained they were students from Paris, en route to visit the shrine of St. Nicholas. Frequently, in towns and villages, they accepted invitations from heretical preachers to public discussion. There was always the hope that the debate might stir the faith in the hearts of fallen-away Catholics.

The companions now numbered nine. Due chiefly to the irresistible charm of Peter Faber's spirituality, Claude Le Jay, Paschase Broet, and Jean Codure had joined the ranks. These three had secured their Master's degrees before leaving Paris. The nine travelers were a source of wonder when, upon reaching and leaving an inn, all knelt in prayer.

Today the journey these men took could be covered in a day or less. For Francis and his brothers some fifty days were needed. Straight travel to Italy was perilous, because of the war, and hence the marchers trekked northward to Meaux, through neutral Lorraine, and thence through a section of Germany and Switzerland.

The five Spaniards and four Frenchmen were looking with eagerness to their journey's end. First, it would mean reunion with Ignatius. Again, there was the projected sailing from Venice to the Holy Land. The people of Metz, marveling at the hazardous journey preceding the travelers' arrival, said "These men could not have come here afoot—but must have flown down from the skies."

The snow drifts of the Alps could not stay them. The Italian hills, snow capped, welcomed them. Finally, on January 8, 1537, Francis and his weary companions trudged into the old city of Venice, where "with great delight of soul, they found Ignatius awaiting them."

[Chapter 7]

A RELIGIOUS ORDER IS BORN

When Francis reached Venice, "throned on her hundred isles," he knew his remaining links with the past were gone. In Paris he had lived and studied upon the meager funds sent from members of the Xavier family. Now he was completely separated from any ties binding him to family or Navarre. Fraternal affection for his brothers remained but no sense of obligation.

"And how is the Canon of Pampeluna?"

Ignatius' question was mere banter. The position of Canon, secured for Francis by his troubled brothers in the hope of dissuading him from this odd new way of life, meant nothing now. His future position in the Church, whatever it might be, would not be parochial. His new ambitions, anticipating reality to come, passed from the parish to the empire. It would be an empire identified with that kingdom of which there would be no end.

All of his judgments were colored by this broader vision. To the thirty-one-year-old Xavier, Venice itself was not

*The pleasant place of all festivity,
The revel of the earth, the masque of Italy.*

Venice was rather the present, but perhaps quickly passing scene, of labor for his Leader's cause. Had Francis wished revel and rout, Paris could have supplied them in plenty. He and his fellows had come to Venice to meet Ignatius and then to set sail for the pilgrimage to the Holy Land—to visit the earth once pressed by the sacred feet of Christ.

The newly arrived travelers plied Ignatius with questions. What happened in his travels in Spain since his departure from their midst in Paris? Was it true the Loyola family, regretting the "loss of their nobleman," tried to dissuade Ignatius from preaching because he "was not a priest"? What did the gamblers of Azpeitia have to say when he secured the civic prohibition against card-playing? What had been the reaction in certain areas of Spain where he had tackled the problem of priests who had abandoned their priestly vows?

Quietly Ignatius, now forty-six but indefatigable in his journeyings and labors, recounted his experiences: The trekking over hills and broken roads on foot with no money in his pocket. His visit to the Chartreuse at Valencia to discuss his future plans with John de Castro, his former professor of humanities at the University of Paris. The extremely rough voyage on stormy seas to Genoa. Lost upon the mountain pass between Genoa and Bologna. His headlong fall into the muddy ditch as he entered Bologna and the derisive jeering of the inevitable small crowd as he struggled onto dry ground.

"But then at length," he told his listeners, now beginning to understand more clearly the type of leader who was to direct them, "here safely to Venice, thanks be to God. He indeed has helped me every step of the way. And I call upon all of you to join with me in thanks to Him because, as a sign of His favor, God gives to us here in Venice three recruits for our labors for Him."

New members for the group. Francis and the other new arrivals rejoiced. Their "father in God" had not been idle in his year of waiting for them in Venice. He had furthered his study of theology, done further work upon the *Spiritual Exercises*, and won others to the cause: two brothers named Eguia, whom Ignatius had first known at Alcalá, and a member of the noble family of De Hoces, who possessed his licentiate in theology.

Now, what about all of them?

"First," explains Ignatius, "we will all remain here until about the middle of Lent. Then all except myself will go to Rome. Personally, I'm doubtful of the reception I myself would receive

there from my old adversary Ortiz. In Paris he always considered me with mistrust; now he's in Rome as ambassador of Charles V, and there's no telling what attitude he might take toward our work."

"And our work itself?"

"First, here in Venice and until you go to Rome, we will live in the hospitals. Five of us in St. John's, the remainder in that of the Incurables. There we will work especially for the sick. Afterward, in Rome, you will seek permission from the Holy Father to make the pilgrimage to Jerusalem."

Thus it was arranged. Francis was among those at the Incurables, more of a barracks than what is known today as a hospital. It stood in the west section of the city close to the Church of San Sebastian, on a lagoon fronting the Fusina Canal. There was little time, and indeed little desire, for sightseeing in the old city rising so starkly from the waters. The *Canalazzo*, the grand canal, moved slowly past beautiful dwellings, abbeys, and the great churches of St. Gregory, the "Charity," and St. Bartholomew. Of this loveliness Francis saw but little. Days and nights were filled with nursing the invalids, and bringing some measure of solace to those in their extremity. Nor was the sensitive nature of the Navarrese always successful in fighting down the physical nausea caused by such proximity to disease.

"I *must*," Francis told himself, "overcome this weakness."

To take a resolution is one thing, to carry through is another. Francis succeeded in this difficult resolve. Sweeping the rooms at the Incurables, washing walls and patients, and cleansing wounds that were often repulsive, Francis built up strength. It was of the moral courage which he knew essential to his self-chosen task of servant of the afflicted. Burial of the dead frequently proved a noisome office.

On one occasion a man whose body was covered by loathsome sores, many of them open and giving off sickening odors, asked Francis to scratch his back. Francis braced himself. We learn of a surging wave of revulsion and even fear which mounted within him. There were sufficient remnants in his character of the former careful cultivation of his healthy body to make him hesitate.

"If you turn from this now," he told himself, "you have lost a battle."

He bent over the reclining figure. His fingers scraped the pus together. Then, with a quick movement, Francis put his fingers into his mouth and sucked them.

It was a definite step forward on the road of holiness and self-conquest. The action must have been difficult beyond mere description in words for Francis. That same night he dreamed he had contracted leprosy. In his nightmare he seemed to choke and suffocate but, as he recounted to Rodriguez the following day, he coughed and vomited the disease forth from him.

The *Iñiguists*, as they were called, continued their works of corporal and spiritual mercy in the hospitals until mid-Lent. Dudon and other historians are probably correct in surmising that these men, fresh from Paris university life, met upon occasion for scholastic as well as religious discussions. Francis had been a master at one of the world's greatest centers of learning but a short while before. His nature was scholarly by instinct. Certainly his pursuit of knowledge was not to be cast aside, nor was such a divorcement from learning suited to the purpose of the companions of Ignatius.

Forecasting the weather is a hazardous business. Ignatius believed, when Lent was half finished, that the roads would be sufficiently passable for the nine brethren to hike to the Eternal City. They would travel in groups of three, a priest and two laymen in each band. In Rome they would explain to the energetic Paul III their purpose in visiting the Holy Land and seek papal approval. Since they were to do evangelical work in Jerusalem, it would be better for them to receive Holy Orders.

"For this, too," Ignatius said, "you must seek the Pope's permission."

Francis' eagerness to set forth mounted. His scant knowledge of Italian caused him no concern. He was going to the center of Christendom and would, if fortunate, see the Holy Father. Trouble or dangers of the long hike? Hardly to be thought of twice. All was in God's hands.

The pilgrims began their journey. It was a miserable one,

arduous and marked by rain-drenched days and nights. If a band of travelers ever experienced "rainy marching in the painful field," it was this group. Carrying Breviaries and a few books in knapsacks, Francis and his fellows trudged a muddy, sodden series of roads.

Certain generous travelers, joining the small group for short distances along the route, paid their ferry fares for them. On a particular Sunday twenty-four miles were covered by the *Iñiguists* beneath a torrential downpour and in bare feet. Along the coast line near Ravenna some nearly fainted with hunger and fatigue. Complaining, however, was not part of the order of march. Hymns were chanted, prayers were recited together, and the same religious atmosphere pervaded the group as that during the earlier traveling from Paris to Venice. Crusts of bread and such delicacies as pine cones, picked from the wet ground, were the complete menu upon certain days. In the marshes of the Romagna, wading through water at times chest-high, Francis offered the hardships encountered as welcome penance. Holy Week approached and such sacrifices were good.

The trip was a forecast, one might say in studying Francis' conduct of himself, of those greater travelings and journeyings reserved for him in the hidden plans of providence.

"I was moved even to tears," Simon Rodriguez recounted long after the journey, "as I beheld our Master Francis and how cheerfully, almost ecstatically, he seemed to welcome all the privations we met. Here was a man of noble family, a distinguished professor of the university, trudging about the market place in Ancona. He was barefooted and exhausted but it was his joy to beg a cabbage or an apple from the unlettered stall-keepers. To watch him, one would think those men were vastly superior to our brother."

Ignatius had been mistaken about the weather but not about the certainty of his band of followers reaching their destination. Personal difficulties among themselves were nonexistent. Decisions to be made were determined by plurality of votes. The record informs us that Francis reminded his companions of the necessity of prudence in matters of sufficient food. "You may recall," he said, "the extreme abstinence we undertook in Venice? If we had

not, we would not now be so exhausted by our journey. As for myself, at least, if I had fortified myself with proper nourishment, I'd have been in better condition to drag myself to the task of gathering alms for all of us. At least, in the future, we must be more prudent."

Rome was reached on Palm Sunday. It was the feast of the Annunciation. The pilgrims separated in little groups in order that each might seek lodging in his own national hospital. All agreed that food was to be begged from door to door. Certain affluent Spaniards in Rome, however, insisted on giving them food and clothing at the Hospital of San Giacomo. Holy Week brought the happy opportunity of making the customary visits to "the seven churches and the stations" of Rome.

The joy of Easter was heightened by the happy outcome of their planning. Or rather the planning of Ignatius, who had given them careful instructions and letters of both introduction and recommendation. As the event proved, Ignatius' concern for the reaction of such men as Ortiz and Cardinal Carafa proved unfounded. The envoy of Charles V had indeed reported Ignatius to the Inquisition in Paris, and the Cardinal, when in Venice, had differed sharply with some of Ignatius' expressed views on the nature of religious orders. All, nonetheless, was "propitious" at Rome.

As the pilgrims' stay continued, it was Ortiz himself who arranged, with evident cordiality, their reception by Paul III, to whom he had praised the newcomers highly. The Pontiff directed that they visit him on the Tuesday after Easter. It is possible that the Pontiff, recalling rumors of the possible existence of heresy at the University of Paris from which these men had recently come, wished to taste of their learning for himself. In any event, he directed that they conduct a scholastic disputation in his presence before supper. This was done in the papal dining hall with cardinals, bishops, and some theologians present.

To the modern mind this might not appear as attractive dining-hall entertainment. The Pope nevertheless was pleased with what he heard and in witnessing how earnestly and correctly the disputants conducted themselves. Pope Paul, "gentle against heretics

but eager for reform," expressed his satisfaction. What could he do for the group?

It was Faber who spoke in behalf of all. "We seek two favors, your Holiness. Permission for a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. And, for those of us not ordained, your permission that we might seek ordination to the priesthood for them from a bishop of our choice."

Paul smiled. The humility and piety of the men before him was, to his penetrating mind, unmistakable.

"Both permissions," he told them gently, "you shall have. We do not think, however, that you will be able to reach the Holy Land."

The Pope did not give the reason for his doubts. He knew, as the petitioners did not, of the league but recently formed by Charles V and the Venetian Republic against the Turks. All pointed to war, and wars are altogether indifferent to the wishes and plans of prospective pilgrims. The Pope presented the "brothers" a gift of 150 golden crowns, bestowed upon them his blessing, and bade them godspeed upon their return journey.

Francis and his companions, journeying back to Venice, were an unusual group of travelers. Perhaps "rollicking" would be hardly the word to describe their joyousness. Festive, however, they were. Priesthood was now upon the horizon for most of the group. Had not the Holy Father granted permission that any bishop could ordain them "on the sufficient patrimony of their learning"? Had not Alfonso Salmerón been granted dispensation for ordination as soon as he reached his twenty-third birthday?

Ignatius would be happy at the news they brought. He would, moreover, be pleased with the spontaneous custom they practiced on the road: the travelers in turn took, each in rotation, the office of "superior" of the group. Each enjoyed the role for a week.

Layneze and Francis slept side by side one night during the pilgrimage back to Venice. Layneze was awakened by Francis' troubled cry as Xavier awakened from a nightmare.

"Dear Jesus!" Francis exclaimed. "How overwhelmed I feel! Can you imagine what I dreamed? I was carrying an Indian upon my back! He was so heavy that I couldn't even lift him."

Years afterward Laynez recounted the incident to Ribadeneira. He could not but observe that there were prophetic implications in this dream of Francis'; although none could know at the time that the day would come when Xavier would, indeed, carry the sick and the dead Indian.

Venice at last. The mission had been successful, and the next few years were a swift-running series of forward steps for Ignatius and Francis and the eager company. Upon their return the companions resumed their care of the sick in the hospitals of Venice until June. In this month, before the Legate Verallio, they renewed their vows. Ignatius and five of his followers received the subdiaconate and diaconate. On the feast of St. John the Baptist, Francis Xavier and the others knew the joy of ordination to the priesthood. Vincent Negusanti, the Bishop of Arbe, ordained them, and later he was to assert that no other ordination which he had conferred had given him more consolation. The date was June 24, 1537.

Luther had trumpeted, not many years earlier, that "the true Church is invisible." The sixteenth century was about to witness, without realizing its import, a branch, perhaps only a twig, of the tree which is the universal Church, begin to grow and extend itself. Ignatius Loyola, surrounded by Francis Xavier and his other first sons, would now "cast abroad" his sons for the strengthening of the Mother Church. Into the university towns — Bologna, Ferrara, Siena, Padua — he will send his disciples, "two by two," to carry the glad tidings of a Gospel and a Church, both indestructible. The trip to the Holy Land had been ruled out by circumstances. No ships would leave that year for the Holy Land. The Domain of Venice and Charles V declared war against the Turk. The Pope had known of this.

Ignatius decides to go to Rome with Faber and Laynez. There he will establish his own personal relations with the Supreme Pontiff. To his sons his directives are clear: they will teach and catechize; they must especially preach to the children and they must sleep in the hospitals in those towns wherein they labor; on no pretext are they to take money for the services they render.

The leader emerges as such upon the stage of contemporary

history. Now (he tells his followers) they form a "Company." It will be called after its Captain: the *Company of Jesus*.

The mind of this extraordinary man, which no historian has ever professed to fathom completely, saw the dangers of the hour. The aggressive and exaggerated "humanism" of men of the stamp of Erasmus believed the necessary reforms were to be found in what was called the "philosophy of the Gospel," thinking to reject the accumulated wisdom of the scholastic philosophers by academic interpretation of the Scriptures. The Anabaptists, so favored by Melancthon, had pushed their "reforms" to the point of rejecting both Mass and the Sacraments. There was on all sides an abundance of that "pride that apes humility." In 1520, Leo X by the Bull *Exsurge*, had condemned forty-one of the more extreme propositional absurdities of Luther, but the damage done by the renegade priest was not to be repaired solely by written dismissal.

Since the trip to the Holy Land was out of the question, Ignatius would place his little Company at the disposal of the Vicar of Christ. He was not attempting the "impossible" nor setting out to reform the world. He simply would offer his group as a small unit for use by the moral guide of the world of his time, the legitimate voice of Christ upon earth. The Pope's voice was being rejected by many. Ignatius would offer to relay, in what manner the Pontiff desired, that voice to others.

How well Loyola would succeed, the years showed after the confirmation of the Society of Jesus in 1540. In 1555, one year before Ignatius' death, the new Order comprised nine provinces — two in Italy, three in Spain, one in Portugal, one in Brazil, one in Japan, and one in India. Ideas, moreover, were to be met with ideas. Although Ignatius had not established his Order primarily as a *teaching* congregation, he realized, certainly by 1548, that the "greater glory of God" was to be achieved in great part in the classroom and in the position his followers would take in the domain of philosophy and theology.

Accordingly, in the definitive *Constitutions*, he lays down the principle that will direct his professors: "In logic, natural and moral philosophy and metaphysics, the doctrine of Aristotle is to be followed" (Part IV, Chap. xiv, n. 3). In theology, "the

Scholastic doctrine of Saint Thomas is to be taught" (*ibid.*, n. 1). Aristotle had been the predominant guide in philosophy at the University of Paris, where the companions had their first training. Thomas Aquinas was favored by Ignatius, even at a time when Peter Lombard's ascendancy was dominant in theological circles. The historian ponders over the vision of Loyola. Certainly it was in accord with past and present practice of the Church in the realm of fashioning theologians and philosophers.

These considerations of the forthright planning and vision of Ignatius are essential to any recounting of the life of Francis Xavier. It is commonly asserted, and correctly, that Francis was Loyola's "eldest" son, his dearest disciple. Francis Xavier, the "stiffest clay" Ignatius had to mold but the follower who was, as far as we might judge, the one dearest to his heart.

Xavier, setting forth "to set a world afire," was sent by Ignatius. Ignatius had formed him in God. Ignatius had, by the continuing impact and pressure of his spiritual force, made a new man in Christ of his devoted follower. Francis, going to the East and a missionary career in 1541, knew his master's mind, his reasons for action, his practical measuring of things temporal as well as spiritual. Francis was Ignatius' man. Apart from the immediate influence of the Spirit of God, Francis Xavier was to become the "apostle" of the Kingdom of Christ because of what he had been given by the one he loved above all other men.

Francis and Bobadilla, assigned to work in Bologna, entered with zest their relatively short stay in the academic atmosphere of that city. Here Don Juan, Francis' father, had taken his doctorate, and the avenues, stretching like long spokes from the central cathedral of St. Peter, were filled with gowned students. Francis' work was not to be academic but rather a carrying out of both spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

One reads that his sermons were clear, unrhetical, and successful in moving hearts. His first Mass was celebrated in Vicenza in the late autumn. His sermons emphasized above all else the reception of the Sacraments.

Among the lessons Francis learned "the hard way" was that of prudent restraint in labors requiring physical effort. Reference

has been made to his own observation upon this during the trip to the Eternal City. Again, during the summer preceding his first Mass, he and Rodriguez threw themselves so completely into their work that they both became patients in the Incurables Hospital themselves. During his illness Francis saw in vision St. Jerome, the great Doctor to whom he had an ardent devotion. The saint comforted Francis in this nocturnal appearance. He warned Francis, moreover, that new sufferings awaited him in Bologna during the following winter.

The brethren decided in November what answer they should give to those questioning them as to their name. All were happy to second the advice of Ignatius: "We shall reply that we are the Company of Jesus." As the members of the Company dispersed through various cities, some, like Francis, were laughed at repeatedly, when they preached in the public squares in their halting Italian. Nor were all the clerics who crossed their path of friendly mind. Heresy was in the air of southern Europe, a dangerous breath coming from the north and arousing suspicion of all who were, especially in religious matters, out of the ordinary in life and mode of teaching. What can one think of these strange men, willing to admit when asked that they are men with university degrees, and yet begging in the streets?

"Fanatics, perhaps? Well, if not that, they do bear watching. One does not know, especially in these times."

It was their burning sincerity and intensity, not their hodgepodge of Italian mixed with French and Spanish, which won the hearts of the many who stopped to listen to the two young priests. It was the same intensity of effort which almost proved Francis' undoing and laid him low in extreme illness. His thin cloak, when he had one, was no protection against the biting cold of Bologna. Nor against the omnipresent fog moving across the city from the adjacent marshes. At times his teeth chattered as he arose to preach. Preaching, in that era, had fallen into negligence, if not disuse in some areas, and the need for it was great. It was an apostolic work and Francis gave himself to it wholeheartedly.

The suffering predicted by St. Jerome came in the severe ague which attacked Francis. When Bobadilla returned to Bologna

with Codure, after a month's absence, he found his co-worker so ill that for a time he despaired of Xavier's life. Careful nursing brought back health, so long missing from the thin and penance-wracked frame, and after Easter Francis was sufficiently recovered to travel with his companions to Rome.

"Our Francis," Rodriguez whispered quietly to the brethren gathered now in Rome with Ignatius, "looks more like a corpse than a living member of our Company. We must watch him."

During the next two years there was much "watching" of Ignatius and all of his sons in Rome and in the localities visited upon apostolic missions. In Rome Ignatius discussed with Francis the possible Rule for the projected Institute. During the travels of the other priests Francis would serve Ignatius in the role of "secretary." Francis, who would have preferred traveling about Italy as home missionary, accepted Ignatius' decision with obedient humility.

"You can satisfy your zeal," Ignatius told him, "by preaching at San Lorenzo and at San Luigi dei Francesi and at certain other churches. But I have work for you here in the meantime."

Francis, then, was close to his leader in the successive events attendant upon the launching, if the word is permitted, of the new organization, to become popularly known in the Church as the Society of Jesus. Ignatius, in turn, served his spiritual son in the role of defender when a particular need arose. An Augustinian friar, actually a heretic in disguise, leveled a charge of heresy against the preaching of Xavier. The accuser had already been warned of his errors by Laynez and Salmerón. Ignatius, without delay, insisted upon an official inquiry. Francis was vindicated of the charge brought by his accuser, Fra Agostino, and the hapless heretic was obliged to leave the precincts of Rome.

Amid a populace which needed moral cleansing, the example and teaching of Ignatius and his priests worked a small but important reform about Rome. Their Sunday preachings to the people and their instructions to students at the Sapienza alike won admiration.

For Francis Xavier there was both joy and opportunity in the work at hand. "Why are you men so desirous," the Pope asked

during one of his frequently requested disquisitions on theology, "of going to Jerusalem? Certainly, if you desire to produce fruit for the Church of God, there is Italy itself, a worthy and true Jerusalem." Accordingly the apostolic labors continued. Events transpired which meant much to the budding organization.

In 1539 there was given up the last remaining hope of the journey to the Holy Land. In the same year meetings of the brethren were held to decide whether they should all remain united as heretofore, or volunteer to go off on papal assignments separately. "In the end," the record of their discussion reads, "we decided that, since the merciful and loving Lord had decreed to bring us together and tie us each to the others, weak men of varying national origin and character, then we should not disrupt this communion but instead we should daily strengthen and increase it. We would make ourselves one body, and in this each should think and care for the others, and all for the greater fruit of souls."

Should a vow of obedience be added to those of poverty and chastity, already taken? A delicate question at the time. The move would make them "religious." The papal Commission of Inquiry had already reported to the Pope that the Religious Orders were very much depressed and that new movements should be held suspect. In such an hour would the Pope permit a new Order? And, it was urged, if they persisted, might not the Holy Father direct them to join an already established Order?

"We will add the vow of obedience," Ignatius announced at length, reflecting the decision of all. "Furthermore, we will add another: that of obedience to the Pope. Thus we will indicate our willingness to work and travel at the call of the Vicar of Christ in whatever manner he might wish to make use of us. We will choose a superior for our group, and he will hold his office for life. Rome shall be our center. And our Constitutions will be drawn up and submitted for approval."

Prior to the writing of the "Constitutions" — that organized foundation of the new Company which was not to reach final form until Ignatius was satisfied with his draft of 1550 — a *plan of life* was prepared and submitted to the Pontiff. This outline, comprising five "chapters," was laid before the Pope on September 3, 1539.

Polanco makes it clear that this written result of the early deliberations was the work of discussions conducted by *all* the associates.

For us, so many years afterward, it is enlightening to read the opening of this document. It contains in germ that dedication to the service of God, and His Vicar upon earth, which flowered in completest detail in the later "Constitutions":

"It is for him, who would combat for God beneath the standard of the Cross and serve the Lord alone and His Vicar on earth in our Society, which we wish marked by the name of Jesus, to keep in mind that, following a solemn vow of perpetual chastity, he is a member of a community established primarily for the work of advancing souls in Christian life and teaching, and for spreading the faith by preaching, by spiritual exercises, by works of charity, and, explicitly, by teaching children and uneducated persons in Christian principles. . . ."

Paul III gave his verbal approval to the document and the permission requested for further organization. So impressed was the Pontiff by the entire document that he later inserted it in its entirety within his Bull of September 27, 1540. The Bull *Regimini Ecclesiae Militantis* was signed in the Palace of St. Mark.

The Supreme Pontiff (the Bull declared) approves and confirms the plan or formula of life outlined for themselves by Ignatius and his companions. This formula has within itself nothing that is not proper, holy, and promising. The pastor of the flock of Christ cannot but welcome workers for the faith whose objective is apostolic labor, carefully protected by the safeguards of Canon Law. The Pontiff, therefore, both blesses such work and such workers, approves both with an approval of lasting force. Ignatius and his companions will draw up complete "Constitutions." The pope takes under his protection this newly born Society, and let no one dare to contravene this Bull of approval. Should anyone dare to do so, he will win for himself only the wrath of God and of the saintly Apostles Peter and Paul.

Francis Xavier, with the *milieu* of Navarrese boyhood and Parisian university training well behind him, is now a member of a newborn Religious Order formally established in the Catholic Church. Now clearly the "finger of God" was upon the God-

directed ambitions of himself and his co-workers. A new way was open to this young priest, won to the service of God by the gentle insistence of Ignatius in Paris.

Whither would it take him?

The answer came with startling swiftness.

[Chapter 8]

“WE ARE ON THE POINT OF SAILING”

Actually, Francis Xavier knew in broad outline the general direction in which his freely elected way of life would lead him. Paul III signed his Bull *Regimini* at a time when Francis had already received his first mandate from Ignatius. His commission had transferred him from Rome to Lisbon, taking him from the Eternal City in March, 1540.

The devotion of the “Companions” to the wishes of the Vicar of Christ was not left long untested. Ignatius and his followers welcomed the opportunity and its challenge.

“It is to be noted,” Loyola wrote in his “Constitutions,” “that the meaning of the vow, with which the Society has obligated itself without reserve to obey the Supreme Vicar of Christ, is that we travel to any part of the world the Pope shall decide to send us for the greater glory of God and the help of souls; and this whether it be among the faithful or among the infidels.”

Or among the infidels.

Among such were countless subjects of John III of Portugal. Portugal, a little country of southwestern Europe, had built for itself a vast and far-flung overseas and colonial empire. King John's dominions, owing to long years of Portuguese advancement by explorer and missionary, contained subjects in the Congo, the Indies, Brazil, and even Japan. As the sixteenth century opened, Vasco da Gama, understanding that India might well become Portugal's “land of promise,” also understood that the Indian

coastal states were not to be taken as easily as had been the African coast.

The dominant power in India's coastal areas was Moslem. To wrest their power from the Moslem lords was Portugal's first objective. Da Gama, believing that the Samorin was Christian rather than Mohammedan, advised winning his support. Cabral informed the Samorin that it was a duty to war against the Moslems. Portuguese fleets, one led by Da Gama in 1502, formed six expeditions to India. The Portuguese undertook the colonization and Portuguese rule in India for economic and political reasons. To the Western royal mind it mattered not if people in India were pagans "suckled in a creed outworn." The religious betterment of the natives troubled them not. Let the missionaries come later if they so wished.

That missionaries should so wish was the plan forming in the mind of King John in 1539. Christianizing his Indian subjects on a wide basis prompted the request which affected the course of a Jesuit priest in Rome named Francis Xavier.

Simon Rodriguez had returned to his native land of Portugal to work as a priest, where his talents singled him out for royal approval. John made him his counselor and confessor to the heir to the throne. The court marveled at the priestly wisdom and skill of the Jesuit as it beheld manners and morals lift steadily. Under Rodriguez' prompting and with his co-operation the Portuguese princes established the Colleges of Coimbra and Evora.

"It is men of the stamp of Father Simon," John told his advisers, "whom we must send to our subjects in India. Hence we must make request for them."

The King consulted Govea. Govea had been rector of St. Barbara in Paris, the college director who, after his interview with Ignatius, decided Ignatius was not to be whipped. Rather, it will be recalled, he became Loyola's friend and an ardent admirer of the band Ignatius drew about himself at the University of Paris. Diego Govea was consulted now by King John. Did Govea believe the time opportune to send missionaries to India? What was to be thought of sending Jesuits?

“Very much is to be thought of such a plan,” Govea told the monarch. “I will see what I can do in this regard.”

Broet, whom Govea consulted, spoke simply. “We have already been approached in a similar matter. Spain has asked for some of our number to travel to her new possessions in America. But in all such matters we remain the Pope’s men. His Holiness has suggested that we can find our America in Rome, at least for the time being. If, on the other hand, the Pope should order us to go to India, why then we should set out joyously.”

The reply was transmitted to King John. Seemingly all depended upon the papal approval. In August, 1539, Don Pedro Mazcarenhas, Portuguese ambassador in Rome, was directed by King John to confer with the Jesuits and then, inasmuch as it proved necessary, seek the Pontiff’s approbation.

“We would not desire,” Pope Paul observed when the request reached him, “to impose an explicit order upon these Fathers in such an enterprise. A voyage so lengthy and dangerous as the one contemplated should be undertaken on a voluntary basis.”

Mazcarenhas was pleased. He consulted with Ignatius again. “Fortunately,” he reported to King John, “I found no difficulty. The Jesuit Fathers, with much pleasure, agreed to make the proposed journey.” How many could be spared? “They can offer us but two men, however. Only six of their number are now in Rome, and the Pope plans to send two others to Ireland and Scotland.”

By this time some new members of the Company had joined the ranks of Ignatius. Of Ignatius’ first companions, only Francis Xavier and Salmerón were in Rome when the Portuguese request was made.

Francis had been rebuilding his health following the illness contracted in the damp north. When he arrived in Rome, Rodriguez had expressed the opinion of the other Companions. “He was so weak, so thin, so played out, that I believed he would never regain his former health. In fact, I almost thought he would not be of further use for whatever work might arise.”

The invalided Xavier, however, had been regaining his strength.

Under Ignatius' watchful eye Francis was becoming his former self. Francis knew of the request at hand. Waiting quietly, he left all decisions to God. Whatever Ignatius decided would be the will of God.

Francis had heard Ignatius' reply when the Portuguese ambassador requested a half dozen of the Fathers. "If for one area," Ignatius pointed out, "you took six out of our ten members, what would be left to us, good Jesus! for what remains of the earth?"

Two could be spared. Francis' expectancy was high. Had he not recovered his health? Had not his holy sister bespoken a great apostolate for her brother? There had been the dream in which he carried the Indian upon his back. A provident sign from heaven? His other dreams, in which he crossed wide oceans to bring savage souls to Christ — Rodriguez knew of these. Perhaps he had told Ignatius of them. Now would Ignatius select him for this work?

Ignatius would not. He named Rodriguez, who himself was a Portuguese. Second choice fell upon Nicholas Bobadilla, strong of body and fearless in character. Francis' hopes sank but in neither word nor gesture did he indicate his disappointment. The good God would arrange whatever might be best for Francis.

And so it proved.

Nicholas Bobadilla became seriously ill in Naples, where, at the Pope's request, he labored to reconcile Joanna of Aragon with her husband Colonna. Despite a physician's prediction that "this man is going to his grave," Bobadilla recovered. Ignatius summoned him to Rome. He arrived there filled with sciatica. The illness canceled out his hopes of setting forth for Lisbon and distant India.

Bobadilla's sciatica and Ignatius' present bout with fever seemed to both Jesuits little more than exasperating annoyances. Ignatius, upon his sickbed was troubled. The Portuguese ambassador was impatient to leave Rome for Lisbon. A decision had to be made. The founder of the Jesuit Order considered his available men. Nearest at hand was the son he treasured with an almost paternal affection. One who could be trusted. One richly endowed with gifts of mind and soul. "A wise son," says *Proverbs*, "maketh a

glad father.” Ignatius made his decision. Here at hand was a son both wise and holy.

“Francis,” he directed, “come here to my bedside.” Ignatius studied the expectant face, the hopeful eyes searching his own. “Master Francis, you know already that the Pope wishes two of our number to go to India. Bobadilla, whom I chose to go with Simon, cannot go. The Almighty seems to have chosen you to take his place. The Portuguese ambassador cannot wait any longer. This is your hour, your opportunity. Will you go?”

Something of joyousness leaped upward in Francis’ heart. The penetrating gaze of the fever-ridden Ignatius read correctly the signs of joyful acceptance and mounting gratitude in his chosen son’s face.

“Certainly,” Francis said eagerly, “at once! Here I stand ready.”

Pues, sus! Heme aqui. Ribadeneira, who succeeded Francis in the post of secretary, has handed down the famous answer. It rings with a simplicity befitting the vast importance of its sequel.

“Go, then, Francis.” Ignatius laid a thin hand upon the shoulder of the man kneeling beside his bed. “You have not ahead of you a narrow Palestine or a small Asiatic area. An unmeasured kingdom awaits your labor. A whole world, indeed, and only such a spreading field is worthy of your strength and your zeal. Go, son, where God calls you and the Church sends you. Go now — *and set the world on fire!*”

To set a world on fire. Francis’ heart soared within at the unlimited scope of such a charge. Henceforth his zeal would fling itself into one consuming purpose: to enkindle the love of God in hearts yet cold through ignorance, indifference, human bitterness, or contempt.

The swift collection of the few things needed for his material needs, Ribadeneira tells us, was “of a most summary sort.” Time was short. There was much to do in less than two days of preparation. A visit to the Pope to receive the Pontiff’s blessing and to discuss briefly the work awaiting in India, work once begun by St. Thomas. “Through obedience to God,” Francis told the Vicar of Christ, “I have accepted this assignment, hoping that with His favor I will be able to carry out with care and diligence that

which your Holiness has commanded me to do in His name."

Three documents to be prepared. To Father Laynez, Francis gave a folder containing three papers. The first was his complete endorsement of whatever "Constitutions" the Society might adopt. The second was the written version of his vows, to be presented to the new General of the group when chosen. The last paper contained Francis' vote for Ignatius as first head of the Order.

The ends of the earth might be his destination but Francis neither had nor needed many earthly possessions for his journeying. He packed "some ancient breeches" (*ciertos calcones viejos*), a worn cassock called "indescribable" by Ribadeneira, a flannel vest for the cold expected in crossing the Alps, and his Breviary. This was deemed enough. *Here I stand ready.*

A last farewell with Ignatius ended with mutual agreement upon the matter of their coming correspondence. A final meeting of hands and a last gaze into each other's eyes. The words of parting were few but both men understood that words, at such a moment, were inadequate things. The date was March 16, 1540. Francis Xavier left Rome for Lisbon in company with Mazcarenhas.

To give and not count the cost. Such is the creed of apostles. Xavier and Ignatius understood that their parting in Rome would most probably separate them until eternity. So the event proved. Theirs was a parting wherein stood little that was sweet unless it was the realization that the spiritual aims which united them were best served by Xavier's departure for India.

The younger years of Francis had been lived in an age, an era of activity. The Renaissance was spending itself in creative art and letters. The ill-favored revolt of self-styled "reformers" was beginning to shake Christendom. Columbus had voyaged and opened a new world just prior to the time of Francis' birth. A decade earlier routes to the Indies became the object of explorers. When Francis was a boy Bramante was building the new basilica of St. Peter's. Michelangelo was readying himself to give the world the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. Copernicus was developing the new astronomy beside the Vatican walls. While Xavier was preparing his first trip to Paris, men were still marveling over the creative works surviving Da Vinci and Raphael, recently

deceased. Religious life was marked by an upheaval heralded by Luther's burning the "godless book of the Pope's decrees" in Wittenberg. Men's imaginations were stirred and men of action were throwing time and energy into new enterprises. In such a time Francis, a brilliant educator and wholly dedicated Catholic priest, rose swiftly to the opportunity to go forth upon a precious adventure into the relatively unknown Orient.

Singleness of purpose shines forth, especially from the time of departure, in the personal history of Francis Xavier. It is the sole explanation under God for the amazing success attending his mission. It reflects, moreover, the value of the lesson: "If thine eye be single, thy whole body will be full of light." Once started, Francis knew an understandable impatience for the departure from Portugal to the East.

An entire year would pass before Francis sailed from Lisbon on his thirty-fifth birthday. Three months were required for the journey with Mazcarenhas from Rome to Portugal. At Bologna, and other cities formerly visited by Francis, crowds came to greet him, many begging for the opportunity to go to confession to the priest they well remembered. The group's advance, largely because of the words Francis gave the people whenever time permitted, has been called "a mission on horseback." The Alps proved all but impassable. The ambassador's secretary fell through a snowdrift and into a ravine. It was Francis who made the hazardous descent, found the hapless fellow in bad condition, and managed to bring him to the surface and safety. One of the young men in the entourage had wandered in foot-loose fashion through half a dozen countries during some years. He needed, he said, "a good confession more than anything in the world" but was unable to bring himself to any confessor. Francis won his confidence, and listened to the young man's dismal recounting of almost endless unedifying adventures. Finally, completely won by Xavier, the young man made his general confession to his new "friend" who completely captivated him.

"For the first time in my life," the youth said afterward, "I understand what it means to be a Christian."

It was in Bologna, in Easter week, that Francis picked up his

pen for the first of that series of letters to Ignatius which make up such a memorable correspondence between two saints.

He thanks his father in Rome for letters received. "Understanding, as I do," Francis wrote, "that we shall probably see each other again in this world only by the medium of our letters, postponing our face to face reunion and our warm embraces to the next life, I suggest we write frequently to each other. As you have suggested, I will write you frequently. And I shall follow your suggestion to use separate sheets upon occasion." The reference was to Ignatius' advice touching upon matters which might be of a secret nature. These were to be placed on separate pages.

At the inns where the travelers stopped Francis himself took the task of rubbing down the tired horses. He used a cot or couch for a bed, urging others to take better sleeping facilities.

In Lisbon, Francis sought his lodgings in the hospital of Ognisanti. Simon Rodriguez was overjoyed to see Francis again, and to receive news of Ignatius and the others in Rome. He told Simon of the expected approval of the Society by Paul III. "But you and I," he went on happily, "will be far away when it comes. How soon, think you, will the king permit us to sail?"

Simon shrugged. "Who knows what a king will do?"

"In any event, I'm ready now." Francis showed Rodriguez the Pope's brief, designating "our beloved son Francis Xavier, one of the afore-mentioned Company of Jesus and professor of theology" to the position of Apostolic Nuncio to the East. Francis had also in his possession another brief granting him extraordinary powers of absolution, for awarding indulgences, and for other privileges. "Besides these," Francis added, "I have two letters from the Holy Father. One is for 'David, the King of Ethiopia' and the other's addressed 'to all princes and rulers of the isles in the Red, Persian, and Indian seas, and all countries on both sides of the Ganges.'"

All promised well for the expedition. Francis learned, to his dismay, that there was indeed more promise than expedition. More than nine long months were to elapse before he would sing the Mass of the Angels — undisputed protectors of all Portuguese voyages — at Belem and the East Indian Fleet would slide

slowly down the broad Tagus. Meantime, and ironically enough, the two men labored in Portugal with such apostolic zeal that King John debated for some months whether he would allow them to go at all.

For Francis the days were not long enough for his care of the sick, the alleviation of the beggars living in the shadow of the sumptuous river palaces, and the renovation of morals at the court. From the straw mat, upon which he slept in the Hospital of All Saints, he arose frequently at night to attend and comfort the emaciated and dying patients who called aloud for him in their pain. Francis spent time seeking priests who might be willing to accompany the expedition to India. Some promises were secured but only two companions presented themselves when the hour of departure arrived. Work was done for the prisoners of the Inquisition, established by King John in 1536, which Paul III had refused for a time to approve. Nor would he send endorsement of the king's brother, the Infante Enrique, as Grand Inquisitor.

The Marranos (the New Christians) were the hapless successors of the Jewish people to whom Manuel I, in 1497, brought involuntary baptism. Francis had been an infant when two thousand Jews were slaughtered in Lisbon in an outburst of intolerant bigotry. Now, as a priest, Francis found some fifty of the New Christians in the Inquisition jail. These Moors and Jews had been baptized against their will. Later, found secretly fostering the religion of their parents, they had been arrested. Francis visited them in prison, conversing with them and winning their good will.

“I was not able to do too much for them. But, when Simon and I were appointed chaplains to these prisoners by the king's brother, we brought them to a point where they were willing to make the first principal meditations of the *Spiritual Exercises*. We instructed those willing to go further. When we converted a well-educated rabbi, the way was open to further conversions. Some prisoners declared that God had granted them a great favor in bringing them to the understanding of the Faith.”

Catechizing, instructing, and the giving of sermons were works

which came more easily to Rodriguez. He was a native Portuguese and at royal expense had been sent to St. Barbara for his education. Francis' knowledge of Portuguese was not of the best. It proved facile enough, however, to win the confidence and the warm affection of the pages and young men of the court. Francis' great gift was a capacity for understanding others, for winning confidence and loyalty. Friendships came easily to him. In the youths of King John's court he saw reflected his own youth, the untroubled gaiety of the young. To the young nobles he gave the *Spiritual Exercises* and urged them to reformation of life wherever needed.

"No matter what I might have to pay for it," John III exclaimed, "I wish I might have *all* the members of the Company of Jesus here in my domain!" It was indeed owing to the king's enthusiasm that the growing Order would have, before very much time passed, its establishments in Brazil, Ethiopia, the Congo, and, of course, in India.

Now a cloud arose on Francis' horizon. The Pope and Ignatius had left decisions in the hands of the Portuguese King. King John, beholding the extraordinary spiritual success of the two Jesuits under his particular direction, exercised a monarch's privilege. He changed his mind. "These men," he announced, "must really stay with us in Portugal. We can send other missionaries to India some time soon." His brother, Cardinal Dom Henry, reminded John of the Pope's commission. This, he suggested, *should* be honored.

Francis was distraught. His plans were increasing daily as he envisioned the work in the Far East and how he should undertake it. In Lisbon among the returned travelers, he had met ambassadors from Ceylon and India and princes from Malabar and Cape Comorin. The wealth of these Oriental nobles impressed him little. All these strangers, on the other hand, were quick to describe the nature of the colonies and, when Francis insisted, the extreme material and spiritual needs of millions of downtrodden souls.

"There is one thing we *can* do," he announced to Rodriguez with determination. "We will appeal to Father Ignatius. He will most certainly know how to handle this matter of delay."

Ignatius sensed (although Francis was to understand it fully only much later) the weak and basically indecisive nature of King John, despite his regular and morally upright life. The question he was called upon to consider was a delicate one. The founder of the Jesuits knew that John was using his influence at the papal court to win the Pope's recognition of the new Order as such. From the letter Ignatius received from Francis, he could extract no explicit attempt upon Francis' part to decide or even determine the matter.

But Ignatius knew the nature of his spiritual son. Francis might leave all the decisions to Ignatius but the latter realized the almost overwhelming disappointment if the two Jesuits were prevented from sailing. "I shall in all things," Francis had written, "accept your decisions, for in them, I know, I shall find the will of God."

Ignatius' solution of the difficulty was marked by the prudent assessment of conflicting aims which characterized his more outstanding decisions all through his life as leader of the Company. Why not agree, he suggested, to the sending of *one* of you? Surely King John will welcome such a proposition? Thus the good for Lisbon and the hoped-for good in India might well be realized, at least in their respective beginnings. What of such a proposal?

It was sufficient. King John agreed. Rodriguez, the native Portuguese, would remain. Francis Xavier should sail for the East. King John's opinion of Ignatius rose even higher. Before the beginning of 1541 the King enthusiastically spoke of opening a house of Jesuits at Lisbon or Evora. Shortly thereafter John wrote personally to Ignatius about a university to be turned over to the sons of Ignatius. Perhaps at Coimbra? Francis, happy beyond expression at the sure realization that he *would* go to India, smiled and was glad. He even wrote an outline for the student curriculum for the project.

"If a college is set up here for us," he declared, "we shall surely have no trouble. All the people here in Lisbon are prepared to erect houses for us if we can only staff them."

Meanwhile, Francis told himself, let others wrestle with the problems attendant upon opening and staffing a university. For

himself the way was open for his missionary enterprise. The fleet would sail in April. With him would travel Micer Paul de Camerino. This priest, a secular, had entered the Society in Rome. Thereafter he volunteered for the missions in India. Francis' second companion was a strange personality, especially as the outcome was to prove. His name was Francis Mansilhas. Xavier had won him to the enterprise while at Lisbon. Mansilhas' studies at Paris had not been very successful. Latin proved such an obstacle that Mansilhas was refused ordination to the priesthood.

"We might," Francis confided, "win permission for ordination in India, especially in view of the lack of priests out there."

The new Governor of India, Don Martin de Souza, would have command of the fleet. The priests would travel aboard his ship. What, Francis was asked, would be the necessities needed for himself? "Very little," was the reply. "Warm soutanes for all three of us, of course, for the Cape will prove a cold business. We will take some spiritual books we have gathered, too." What of the manservant the Governor's lieutenant suggested?

Francis' eyes sparkled with a mixture of amusement and quiet determination. He knew the servant was proposed as befitting the priest's "position." His reply was gently firm. "My friend, this strong emphasis upon a false 'position,' if I may borrow your word, this passion to maintain a front, this is precisely what has led Christianity into its current regrettable condition in so many areas. Do not be disturbed. I'll clean my own dirty clothes and I'll cook my own food, and also that of others. But be sure that in all of this I'll not forfeit any esteem of others."

To Francis' delight King John did all possible to facilitate the fleet's departure. John marveled as he learned that Francis did not deem that his position as Papal Nuncio necessitated his having a servant. In their last interview together, John was as one whose own brother was leaving on a journey, perhaps never to return.

"Do write me regularly," he begged, "for it is from you that I can learn perhaps best about the state of my Portuguese colonists. Tell me, too, of the conversions that you achieve. The lot of my

people in India is a pitiful one in many instances, and this grieves me. But you will do much for them.”

Francis nodded. Across his mind swept the vision of large crowds of newly won Christians, wrested from the darkness and the degradation of pagan excesses. “I will do,” he murmured, “as much as I can, God willing.”

There were the final lines to be written to Ignatius. Tribute, too, to the Christian King who had helped his purposes so much. “I pray God that He will grant this John a lengthy life, for he will know how to use it because he is so useful and indeed necessary to his subjects (*utilis et necessarius populo suo*).” Little more remains save to commend all to God’s favor and blessing.

“In addition, Father Ignatius, to your regular remembrance of us in your devotions, do now accord us a most especial one for the long trip ahead. Pray, too, for our coming dealings with the pagans, inasmuch as we have relatively little understanding of our work. Because of this we have grounds for more help than is usually sought.

“For the rest, little remains but to say that now we are on the point of sailing.” The pen lifts, hesitates, then seeks again the paper for the last words of farewell to the friend from whom so much has been received, and from whom parting is such a deep sacrifice. “I conclude by beseeching Christ our Lord to permit us to see each other once more and be brought together in the afterlife, for I fear that we will never see each other again here below, since very long is the distance between Rome and India. And in India the harvesting will be great enough without searching elsewhere for souls.”

It is enough. More is not necessary, especially in this last letter to Ignatius. He will understand, and Francis is already experiencing, even amid the lonely sorrow of farewell, the rising but quiet joy in a missionary work now beginning.

Three weeks the fleet is delayed while navigators pray to the angels, whose particular business it is to send necessary winds. On April 7, his birthday, Francis preaches from the shore to the crowds of Belem and the strangers in town who gather to watch

the sailing of the fleet. Overhead the sun shines upon the crowd and little bunches of clouds go scuffing swiftly before the favorable winds. The sermon is finished. Francis walks swiftly to the little waiting boat with Simon Rodriguez at his side. He places one foot upon the wooden planking, turns, grasps Simon's hand.

"Tell me, Francis," Rodriguez says softly, "tell me now, if you wish to, the meaning of that cry of '*More! More, Lord!*' which used to burst from you while you slept."

Francis gazes steadily into the questioning eyes of this brother he will probably not see again. The matter of his cries, while he dreamed, has come up before. Formerly, however, he had colored but not given explanation. Francis drew a deep breath.

"Simon," he says swiftly in a low voice, "in those dreams it pleased our Lord to show me some of the trials and the sacrifices which lay ahead for me in my following of Him. For better or worse, I begged Him to grant me even more. What will all this mean? Who knows, except our Lord Himself? But now — now I pray that the time has arrived when what God showed me then will come to pass."

Simon is left alone, marveling upon the shore. Men called this shore of Restella "a spot for tears" because of the sailings so common here. But neither Simon nor the departing Francis have room for tears. For the one there is a sense of loss swallowed up in almost reverential admiration. For Francis, standing upon the deck as the *Santiago* moves slowly downstream, the moment is one of extreme joy. The prevailing winds are sharp across his face. His eyes are narrowed but his gaze is not focused upon the fading Tower of Belem.

His eyes are upon a vision which contains in its sweep a well-remembered boyhood in Navarre and a future manhood enterprise in the Orient. The shouts of hurrying sailors are about his ears. Francis scarcely hears what is said. Above the sailors' cries is the echo of a charge given him in the Eternal City.

"Go — and set the world on fire!"

[Chapter 9]

PASSAGE TO INDIA

Francis Xavier leaned for a few moments' welcome rest against the chest-high rail of the *Santiago's* foredeck. Thin rivulets of perspiration slid downward beside his nose and onto his upper lip. Francis did not bother to brush away the drops of sweat, glistening unnoticed in the hot sunshine. His gaunt frame against the rail moved almost imperceptibly with the slow rolling of the lumbering flagship through the sluggish Atlantic waters.

With unconscious shuddering the gaunt figure of the priest shifted position. A soft breath of wind had swept against his face the collected odors rising from the stinking steerage. Dear God, *the smells*.

Francis' fingers, skeletal in appearance after two months at sea, gripped the rail. He forced his shoulders back, making his chest muscles drink inward a long deliberate breathing. "Do this," he murmured to himself, "or you'll be sick again."

The seasickness, wrenching his stomach muscles with convulsive retching, was continually with him. It tore at him during these first three months at sea. When the vomiting passed he stood, weakened and with tears of exertion and exasperation clouding his vision. Would he ever overcome this crippling weakness? The question itself irritated nerves in his fatigued body. The work to be done for others on the overcrowded carrack was increasing daily, and he could least afford sickness. Don Martin and he were necessary for the well-being of the other men. But the new

Governor of India, his black pointed beard lifted with an almost jaunty defiance against all trouble, never appeared to suffer from seasickness.

"I think de Souza's guardian angel," Francis told Micer Paul with a weary half-smile, "is more experienced in this sea trafficking than mine. Mine doesn't seem to learn how we're to get used to all of this."

Micer Paul, always the complete optimist, laid an encouraging hand on Francis' arm. "Don't worry, Father Francis. You'll get over it. I have myself. Don't be comparing yourself to the Governor anyway. The Viceroy's been traveling in these awful ships for years, even back and forth to Brazil. He's at home on the ocean. I wouldn't be surprised if by now his angel comes to Don Martin for advice on the navigation. Take heart, though. Ordinarily it takes the fleet only about five months to reach Goa. Long before then you'll be accustomed to all of this."

All of this. Francis smiled. Micer Paul was right. One learns by doing. One also admits in honesty that "all of this" was not the colorful voyaging of wind-propelled galleons which is a landsman's concept of sea travel.

The annual caravel — a little fleet of four to six ships — trekking the ocean lanes from Portugal to India, transported soldiers, ammunition, and varied cargoes back and forth. Spices, peppers, silks, hard fruits, and Indian woods filled the holds. Four months were spent along the Indian coast while natives sweated in loading and unloading. Four thousand miles was a sea voyage, made under conditions twentieth-century navigators would consider appalling, a progress through punishing storms, periods of enforced calm marked by scurvy and even insanity, a lonely way frequently marked by crazed shipboard murder, by floggings, and by moral collapse into lusts and obscenities.

And, over all, the merciless heat sucking dry a man's veins even while it bathed his undernourished body in sweat. Three fifths of the trip was beneath an unclouded sun whose rays shimmered like weaving, dancing waves of shiny glass, until the squinting eyes of sailors could not distinguish the atmosphere from the sparkling surface of the ocean.

"This heat," Francis wrote to Ignatius, "almost completely defeats me. Not only by itself but with the nauseating attacks it brings on."

Francis, however, was not one to complain. To Ignatius alone he mentions difficulties met with on the ocean and sea voyages making up his missionary endeavors. Even herein there is no dwelling upon these hardships. Simply the summary statement of his experiences, enough to give his superior as "full" account as is proper. Thus, writing from Mozambique, during the course of this voyage to Goa, he sums up the total of hardships in a few brief lines. "For two months perhaps I suffered from the seasickness. Truly I suffered much during that period, especially, when we were completely becalmed off Guinea. But then God our Lord had mercy on us and brought us to this island."

The letter then goes on at length, telling of the works which were, after all, those labors which all his priestly being yearned to accomplish.

"You will be most happy to know that our Lord has now found use for us as the servants of His servants. As soon as we reached this place, we began taking care of the unfortunate sick persons who came in the same fleet. I've spent my time hearing confessions, distributing Communion, and assisting these men to die happily. Micer Paul and Francis Mansilhas concerned themselves with the bodily needs of the sick, and we have all been doing what we were able to for the poor folk, as much as our weak and small capacity has allowed. With regard to success, the Lord knows of that for it is He who achieves all of it. It is gratifying to us to realize the Governor and the officers of the fleet now understand our wish to be without any desire for human favors, and completely *propter Deum*."

This letter is typical of the 127 letters remaining to us from the correspondence of Xavier. The accent is always triple: the work God has permitted Francis to achieve, the weakness of the human instrument in the apostolic activity, and the desire that all enterprise be *propter Deum*.

What of the obstacles to be surmounted during the memorable voyage from Lisbon to Goa?

"The difficulties and efforts required," Francis continues, "were

of such nature that, if left to my own resources, I would not have risked them for the space of a single day, not for all the world." Whence will come the strength needed? "We beseech you all [at Rome] for the love of our Lord to pray especially for us, and remember us in your Holy Sacrifices, because you know indeed what inadequate metal we are." Finally, in passing, a reference to the recurrent illness which dogged his heels so frequently. "I would greatly desire to go on with this letter but illness prevents it. I was bled today for the seventh time, but I am, thanks be to God, fairly well at that."

Historians are fortunate that others upon the *Santiago* left record of the impressions given by the Jesuit priest who proved "an angel in our midst." The story of his ministrations would not have been told had it been left to Francis. The account of the year's journeying is a dismal record, relieved by the selfless concern continually shown by Xavier for all aboard ship.

The soldiers, within the noisome steerage, were crowded into quarters that reeked with stench. No sanitary conveniences were available. Food putrefied. Meager water rations, especially during forty days of motionless calm off the Guinea coast, were crawling with insects. Bugs inevitably reached the supply of salted food and hard biscuits before the sailors received their dole. Scurvy was rampant among the three hundred men aboard. What larger rations Francis received were immediately given away to the men sweltering in the torrid closeness below decks. The few morsels he ate himself, washing the flat taste of them away with gulps of brackish water, helped increase the recurrent attacks of seasickness.

Francis, because of his dignity of office as Nuncio, was assigned one of the ship's few cabins. It appears that the only times he used it were when he carried some disease-stricken sailor in his arms into the small cabin. There he would nurse and wash and minister to the invalid, snatching for himself a few hours' imperative rest upon the wooden planking at the foot of the wooden bunk. Within his cabin, also, Francis found the few periods of privacy for reading portions of his Breviary and for prayer. One reads that these prayer periods, usually to be had only late at night, were frequently interrupted by a summons to the fetid areas below

where some delirious sailor cried for Francis in his nightmare.

The dreaded "calms" awaited the five ships after they passed Sierra Leone. The forty days following were a sweltering time for the *Santiago*, which stood like a "painted ship upon a painted ocean." The ship lay bathed in heat mist. Aboard ship men lay panting in a scene infernal in quality.

An occasional stirring of a hot breeze rolled the *Santiago* without enabling it to make progress. Xavier staggered from one deck to another. The soldiers and sick sailors needed his ministrations and they would have them. "Look," it was said again and again, "how Father Francis *smiles!* It's beyond belief in this hellhole." Those who admired Francis' preservation of even temper underestimated that deep gift for friendship and *camaraderie* possessed by this priest. It was a facet of his nature which all experienced and which all his biographers have singled out. Friendship, "to men and angels only giv'n, to all the lower world denied," was an endowment of Francis' nature which, once exercised, won men of all ages and conditions to him.

The fleet vessels, short of length and high of deck, were built for the accommodation of cargoes, rather than passengers. Those not possessing one of the rare cabin spaces were forced to find for themselves some corner or narrow space upon the cargo-crowded vessel. In the cleared spaces men were packed together with neither privacy nor comfort, confined in steaming heat. Tempers rose, and frayed nerves, torn with irritation, led to fist fights. The overheated air was jarred with frequent blasphemies and obscenities. Bloody sequels followed sessions of gambling, and immorality of a peculiarly vile nature was frequent.

In such a setting, typical of Portuguese voyaging, Francis Xavier moved during the year-long journeying before the *Santiago* reached Goa. The gradual but sure transformation he worked throughout the ship was a miracle of the moral order. The story of his ship-board labors would be a typical account of *all* his missionary activities.

Francis was not one to enter a situation with storming denunciation of manners or morals. First, he attempted to win the confidence of souls. The effect of friendly, fraternal affection and

interest, with no word or sermon, was a powerful magnet winning souls to this man of goodness. Much of the evil about him, Francis knew, was due to physical conditions which would have disgraced any jail.

The sick must always take precedence. His services for them, unending and with an unheard-of tenderness, stunned the beholders. Those watching the thin priest washing wounds, cleansing pus pockets, and bathing the fever victims, knew that ordinarily passengers on such voyages died like flies. The ship's doctor on the *Santiago* was overwhelmed in admiration at the *padre's* skill in treating sickness of body and mind. "It plainly is nothing short of a miracle," he recorded in his diary, "that only forty-one of those aboard on this trip have died. And this is due to the care of this Father Francis. I watched him at work, and it was work of love and zeal. From all who had such he begged alms and food for the sick and destitute. But it was he himself who nursed and cared for those lying helpless. There wasn't even a moment, as it were, when he wasn't busy hearing confessions; or instructing in the Christian religion, or nursing the stricken. And Francis has done all of this with great joy of countenance (*magna vultus hilaritate*)."

Whether aboard the crowded ship or ashore, Francis seemed preoccupied with those felled by disease. Further testimony comes from a certain Master John, who observed the priest at work on Mozambique. The island, enjoying the dismal nickname of "The Graveyard of Portugal," saw the travelers from Lisbon during their enforced winter stay on its joyless shores.

"Francis' labors for the patients," Master John tells us, "be it in the hospital where he lived himself or aboard the idle ships, laid him low. He was racked with a fever. I went to see him, begging him to stop his work if only for a little time. After all, he was sick himself. If he didn't, he might well die. He could resume his nursing of others when he regained his health.

"That priest! He told me he had to sit up that same night with a certain brother whose soul, as well as his body, needed Xavier's help. Afterward, he would stop working. This 'brother' was a sailor who had been delirious for some days. The next morning, when

I went to visit Father Francis, I found him sitting on the floor beside the bed, upon a coil of rope. The sailor was lying in the priest's own little berth, a type of rope hammock with a coarse blanket, an excuse for a pillow, and little else. The sailor had regained his wits and made his confession."

The story is typical. A soul saved, and little else mattered. The following evening the sailor died, after receiving Holy Communion. "The Father," Master John goes on, "was filled with joy. Actually, he forever seemed joyous, even when he was overburdened with labors."

Labors or no, Francis seemed unable to find enough work to satisfy him. In what few "free moments" he enjoyed he carried the food allotted to him at the Viceroy's table to others on the *Santiago*. There was always, moreover, the word of God to be given to all. "Every Sunday," he writes to Ignatius, "finds me at the foot of the mainmast. There I preach to the ship's company. And, of course, there is the great amount of confessions to be heard, here at sea while we traverse the kingdom of the fishes."

To be "all things to all men." There was the program and, with God's help, therein lay victory.

The cursing of the sailors diminished and finally seemed to end completely. Don Martin professed amazement. The rough men beneath his command seem to be bewitched. The Viceroy studied the priest who, by a quasi-infinite patience and tireless labors, won the friendship, the affection, and at length the obedience of the hard-bitten crew and human cargo of the flagship. He would marvel at the priest's discussion of gambling losses with the losers themselves, making the sailors understand that gambling led to personal ruin and, at times, to loss of virtue. Francis' exquisite breeding and courtesy never permitted him to fall into the error of talking down to the men he won to the ways of religious living. On the other hand, one learns of the intelligence he brought to the conversations with De Souza and the "gentlemen of quality" aboard, discussing with them the realm of politics and the intricacies of colonial government.

It was when the voyage was half over that the sailors began calling the *padre* by the name of "holy father." To them he

represented all that was good, all that could and should be trusted. Francis, knowing this, permitted them to continue using that name, believing that this was advantageous to the winning of the men's souls. For himself, on the other hand, he has told others that his labors on the journey to Goa were so great he never could have faced them "for a single day."

How then to accomplish them? "I have accordingly offered continuous thanks to God. It is He who has made me understand my own weakness and, then, has given me the strength to do what is expected of me." Readers of the missionary's own letters can sense the extent to which Francis had made part of his very being the principle of the *Spiritual Exercises: Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*. The glory of God in greater and greater compass — there stood the objective, there the consuming purpose of Xavier's multiple endeavors.

The landing, in late August, in Mozambique was a step which Don Martin welcomed. Now, perhaps, the ships can be cleaned. The scurvy and disease stamped out. Perhaps, too, the number of deaths will decrease, especially when there is fresh drinking water and relatively clean food. The Viceroy's hopes were in vain. More men died during the winter months on the island, standing off the African east coast, than had died aboard the five crowded ships.

Late at night Francis would sink wearily to the ground, stretching his length for what repose he could find. Lying on his back, he would gaze into the star-hung heavens. Such moments were the only time available to "look before and after," to let his memories move backward and recapture scenes of boyhood and young manhood. On the first long leg of the journeying his star-searching at night found the Southern Cross hung, as an assurance of hope, in the brilliant subequatorial sky. The Cross was *his* star. It brought back the memory of the sacred crucifix which meant so much in the Xavier household in distant Navarre. Would he ever see Navarre again? The question was an idle speculation and the priest smiled at the blue-black heavens, knowing that most probably there would be no return to Navarre. Nor to Paris. Nor Rome.

Mozambique took its toll of the men in lives and in sickness.

The bitter storms encountered by the five ships in rounding the Cape of Good Hope had initiated alternate chills and fever. The illness could not be shaken off by many sailors in their already weak and undernourished condition. Some were carried ashore at Mozambique on litters. Even Don Martin fell ill after he went ashore.

"And we were to have reached India," he groaned, "in six months. Now we'll be lucky if we get to Goa by spring. As soon as we can we will set sail again."

On March 15 the fleet left Mozambique.

"I can remain," Francis told the Viceroy. "Someone should stay to tend the men who are too ill to sail again."

Don Martin shook his head wearily. "No. You're feeble enough, after your own sickness, to leave the work to others now. Besides, I want you aboard. We will allow Father Paul and Mansilhas to stay upon the island to nurse the sick. Now, Father Francis, a word about the *Santiago*. What's all this about it facing disaster?"

Francis looked directly into the fleet commander's eyes. He drew a deep sigh. "You've heard this before. When one of your officers remarked that it's the best vessel of the fleet, I agreed. But I also said that I thought it was destined to meet trouble."

"Trouble?" Don Martin pulled at his beard thoughtfully. "Bad trouble?"

The priest ignored the impatience edging the other's voice. He shrugged slightly. "Bad trouble, your Excellency. Don't ask me how I know this. I simply have the conviction that disaster awaits the *Santiago*."

The Viceroy was troubled. This priest was the most extraordinary person he had ever met. That Xavier was a man favored by God was evident to the Viceroy's shrewd observing eye. Now Francis prophesied disaster. Loss at sea? Fire aboard the flagship? Shipwreck? It all seemed absurd. Francis was no visionary, no superstitious sailor, no peddler of whims and fancies. Don Martin hesitated. If nothing happened, in spite of Xavier's prediction, what would the court of Portugal say when reports showed the new Governor of India had abandoned his chosen flagship for a supposedly "safer" vessel?

"You're *sure* of this?" Don Martin struggled to keep his inward irritation from showing in his voice.

Francis smiled at him. "I'm sure," he replied softly.

The result was that another ship was chosen to carry the Viceroy, his officers, and Francis himself. The men sailing upon the *Santiago* remained as ship's company but under protest. Many, murmuring something about the *padre's* ill-health, scouted the notion of Xavier having any foreknowledge.

"You'll see," they assured their less hardy crew members "Nothing will happen. The priest is wrong."

But some months later the *Santiago* was wrecked near the Salsette coast. The men aboard escaped with their lives, but the entire cargo of the vessel was lost.

Somewhat less than two months' traveling brought the fleet to Goa. North of Mozambique certain islands were visited to secure water and to unload small portions of cargo. When the ships reached the island of Socotra, off Arabia, Francis found among the inhabitants a strange mixture of religious beliefs. The general religion of the islanders was a combination of elements of Mohammedanism and Nestorianism — brought to the island by Abyssinian Christians. In writing Ignatius, Francis expressed his surprise to find men and women with the names of the Apostles, and the name of Mary. The people professed to be good Christians. Baptism was not administered but veneration of the crucifix, long fasts, visits to the Church of St. Thomas the Apostle, and other religious practices prevailed.

"I had the great joy," Francis said later, "of preaching to these good people. Best of all, I baptized many of their children. The people wished me to remain here with them. Don Martin, however, refused such permission. He pointed out the island was subject to Arab raids, and has some amusing notion that I might be captured and made a slave. He thinks, moreover, that the greater apostolic work is to be found in India."

The greater work did indeed await Francis in India.

A quick passage across the Indian Ocean, and the weary ships and tired men who sailed them saw, on May 6, the shores of Goa emerge from the misty haze hanging above the coast line. Francis'

eyes searched the mists, discovering the gaunt mountains of the mainland. His heart beat faster as the pebbled sandy shore drew nearer. This was India, the land to which he had been sent. Its almost measureless extent and uncounted millions of souls stood before him. He felt the challenge of the long-awaited moment.

"Dear Lord," he prayed silently, "let me work well for Thee!"

[Chapter 10]

BEGINNINGS IN GOA—1542

"Goa," Francis wrote shortly after arriving in the capital of Portuguese India, "is truly a marvel to behold (*cosa para ver*). One really should see this city, with its multiplicity of churches, the goodly number of its priests, the Franciscans in particular. These Fathers came here after the renowned Albuquerque took Goa in 1510. A man cannot but thank God sincerely that the name of Christ is so respected in this distant area and amidst such crowds of pagans."

This first letter was enthusiastic. Francis had cause later to modify his approval. It was typical of him that, as always, his optimistic approach to persons and places filled him with initial enthusiasm. Then, to his dismay, he frequently learned that all was not as bright as imagined upon first meeting.

In Goa one sensed that the name of Christ received lip service rather than the tribute of devout Christian living. This was especially true of the Portuguese colonials and the natives governed by European masters. The lack of Christian virtue and method among the Portuguese in India plagued Francis all during his years in the East.

He had at the first, moreover, high respect for Don Martin, his erstwhile traveling companion and the new governor. Months of further observation forced Xavier to qualify his opinion. De Souza was, if not an evil person, one basically weak in character. He was in no way divorced from the pettiness of political intrigue.

The beautiful city of Goa was set upon an island in the estuary of the Mandivi River. Its cape projected between two promontories. With its twofold harbor the city was, as Camoens described it, "the Queen of the East and the pride of the children of Lusus." To Francis Xavier, Goa revealed itself as an iniquitous center of myriad forms of evil and the grosser forms of heathen superstition. Hapless Hindu natives were exhibited, pinched, beaten, and sold, for a maximum price of thirty silver pieces, in the slave market. The market adjoined — of all places — the cathedral. Frightened Kaffirs were stolen from Mozambique, then traded and sold in regular trafficking by so-called Christians. Let a slave protest or show understandable lack of joyousness, and the owner's servants thereupon applied the *bastinado*. Strokes were counted, at times, even upon the rosary beads of the owner, while this worthy remarked to prospective buyers the appalling lack of discipline and the ingratitude of such recalcitrant slaves.

Francis shuddered at the licentiousness of the city.

"Where Venus directs all and tears all across,

Where Evil's boasts are deemed Virtue's loss. . . ."

Such was the city. A fair façade, behind and beneath which lurked inward corruption, lechery, and varied depravity. Much of this evil was unseen by new arrivals or by transient visitors. The "dead men's bones" were nonetheless within the sepulcher. Francis was to be struck by the moral stench of the city as he learned more of his new environment. Goa's atmosphere later gave rise, in Portuguese literature, to the phrase *Babylon and Sion* — meaning Goa and Lisbon. The slogan given by this *Sion*, for its eastern empire builders, in the words of King Manuel, was: "The Service of God Our Lord and Our Own Advantage."

This monarch had sent Vasco da Gama on his great expedition. By the rounding of Good Hope, Da Gama found the route to the massive Asiatic peninsula. Following this "opening of the East," in 1497, travelers had no further need to depend upon the dangerous overland routes, most of which had, moreover, been closed to Europeans by the Saracens.

Formerly the trade of Persia, Egypt, Arabia, and India was handled almost exclusively by Moslems. A few Chinese junks

visited the towns of the Malabar coast. India was a distant country, known to the Western world but deemed inaccessible.

The first decade of the sixteenth century changed the picture completely. In a century of exploration and discovery, the Portuguese raided the Indian coast and seized, as first prize, the city of Goa. The invaders found there Jewish and Spanish elements, exiled from the West. The native Hindus possessed a culture and civilization of their own which, if not the best culture in the world, might be considered higher than much which the "liberalizing" Portuguese brought with them. Hindu treatment, for instance, was far more humane in handling prisoners of war. The Portuguese were cruel and not above torturing, even to death, those who fell into their hands. The Malabar merchants were so honest in business dealing that, like the Chinese who visited them, they needed no written bills or receipts. Rajahs and other lords treated their subjects with fairness. The Portuguese, on the other hand (as the historian Sewell asserts), believed "they had a divine right to pillage, rob, and massacre the natives."

Some incoming Portuguese, it is true, tried in the beginning to deal with the natives of India with reasonable fairness. Most of them, however — adventurers by choice and paying but token respect to Christian *mores* — were rapacious and unfeeling opportunists. The lead was taken by Da Gama himself. He announced the King of Portugal as "King of the Sea," and thereupon began a bombardment of Calicut, killing 800 simple and defenseless fishermen. His men scuttled a native ship with 700 persons aboard. Such onslaughts could not but foster hatred of the European in the native mind. The succeeding viceroy, Almeida, with 1500 troops waged war against the natives until finally Almeida realized that in the long run such procedure would cripple Portuguese efforts in India.

Thereafter a policy of conciliating native princes, assisting one rajah against another in the interests of Portuguese ascendancy, and favoring Hindus over Moslems, was maintained. Portuguese factories and fortifications began to grow along the Malabar coasts. Goa itself grew and with its increasing luxuries arose a culture not unlike the paganism of ancient Rome.

Francis Xavier made Goa his headquarters during his missionary years. The Viceroy invited the priest to live with him in the governor's palace. "I have found," Francis said, "more attractive quarters." As was his wont, Francis lodged in the public hospital.

Ignatius, at least, would not have been surprised to see his son "taking residence" in the Albuquerque Hospital. To Francis the five months of his first stay in Goa provided opportunity to give all his spare time to the sick and diseased. The outcasts, the leprous, the despair-filled sick knew his hands, which tended them, and his words which brought them to the Christ many of them had almost forgotten, or had never known. Many were indifferent Christians, weak converts who had accepted the Faith "for a new hat, or jacket, or to escape execution." Now, sleeping next to their pallets was a strange man. This man, too, was from Europe—but so entirely unlike the Portuguese they had come to accept as representative of the West.

Reading between the lines of his letters, one senses how much Francis cared for the jail prisoners in the city's three prisons. For the convicts he appointed himself chaplain and purveyor of little creature comforts. All things to all, Francis knew the psychological and spiritual value of begging the charity of the wealthy in order to alleviate the needs of the pauper, the outcast, and the prisoner. Galley birds and riffraff were introduced to ways of grace. Their new priest-friend seemed as joyous in cooking their meals as in bringing them, gently but with irresistible suasion, to an oft-needed general confession.

The "Impatient One" Xavier has been called by his contemporaries. Restlessness drove him on in the questing of souls. One sees it at every turn.

Besides the sick and the imprisoned, he sought out what, especially in those earlier times, many believed to be the most pathetic of men: the lepers.

"On Sundays," Francis wrote, "I leave the city itself and I offer Mass for the lepers. Now, thanks to God, all the inmates of their lazaret-house have made confession to me and received Holy Communion." Did the lepers respond? "They are now my friends, my very close friends." In such few words the priest sums

up a story which in actuality held little or no attraction in the natural order.

Immediately following his arrival in Goa, Francis visited the city's Bishop, Don Juan de Albuquerque, a Franciscan and former confessor of King John, who had spiritual jurisdiction over all Portuguese areas in Africa and the East Indies. Xavier found in the Bishop a kindred soul, one who lamented the excesses of the Europeans in India. "To make matters worse," Don Juan pointed out, "there is here a woeful lack of priests. But you realize that yourself. Then, let it be said, some of the priests have fallen into evil ways. How does one look for the conversion of natives to Christianity when they see the immorality, the sort they have come to expect in Europeans, touching even the lives of Catholic priests?"

"But what of your own good Franciscans?" Francis asked.

The Bishop spread his hands. "We have some priests, yes. But, Father Francis, what is a handful among so many? The Portuguese, so many of them, are interested in only one thing — money. How to make it. How to pile it up no matter what means are used. And the Hindus? Their idolatry is not, my friend, something they have recently acquired. It's in their tradition, their blood. It's part of the family and the government of India. You'll have your troubles, Father, trying to drive the devil out of human beings who worship serpents."

Francis' keen eyes noted much as he walked the city streets in his worn soutane. His ears drank in, almost greedily, whatever information was in the answers to his seemingly casual questions to storekeepers, ship workers, and the frequently informative observations of his prisoner converts.

He spoke with Moslems, noting with resignation that their religious beliefs were brimful of fanatical devotion to what seemed to its practitioners a completely satisfying religion. In the environs of Goa and the outlying districts, some 23,000 "Christians" numbered themselves among the descendants of converts made by the Apostle Thomas and his first priests.

"But these," he was told, "are really Nestorians. They obey the schismatic patriarch of Babylon. Their liturgy is Syrian, as you'll see when you visit their churches."

When Francis, kneeling, presented to Don Juan the papal Bulls, establishing Xavier as Apostolic Nuncio, the prelate lifted him and embraced this new priest, more than welcome in a vineyard harassed by lack of workers. "Make use of all your powers, Father Francis," the older man said with warmth. "There is so much to be done that I hardly know how to tell you where you should begin. But your own observations will show you the way, and the need. In reality, you need no permissions of mine. The Holy Father has granted you faculties which are yours alone. They are wide, and you will not exhaust them."

Francis smiled slightly. "True. Let us pray, good friend, that this work here will not exhaust me in the meantime."

Don Juan de Albuquerque smiled. "I have a feeling it will not. Or, rather, if it does, there will be no cause for complaint. Least of all from yourself."

Complaining was not to be found in the lexicon of Francis Xavier. "Blessed is he," Thomas Carlyle has written, "who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness." Xavier had found work, more than one man could master in many lifetimes; and this work he counted his blessedness. His cry of earlier days, "*More! More, Lord!*" reiterated itself within the depths of his apostolic soul now as he moved through Goa's streets and crooked alleys.

All about him Oriental richness and sumptuous color. The sandstone palaces, some of great size and ornamented with curved balconies, looked down upon the street beggars with cold indifference. The oyster-shell panes of latticed windows broke up the brilliant sunlight into infinite color shadings, reflecting the bright rays and permitting only soft glowing illumination within the halls and rooms of the mansions. Red and white were predominant colors in the walls of the better houses and bazaars, the over-all result being a colorful, almost deceptively bright splendor through the shopping streets of the capital. Shouts of merchants mingled, during the morning hours, with the bleating of goats and the neighing of pack animals as pilgrims to Goa pushed their way through the crowds. Many farmers from adjacent rural areas pushed or dragged their little carts, overladen with herbs, live

pigs, and miscellaneous vegetables, into streets already filled with jostling citizens. Pottery workers squatted beside their wheels chanting prices and the quality of their merchandise.

This is a land, Francis thought as he elbowed through the crowds, almost beyond belief in its massing of human beings. His heart knew a frequent uneasiness at the thought of the millions of souls, their number known only to God. Can you hope, Francis, to even *begin* the conversion of so many?

With others he flattened himself against the baked clay wall of a shop whenever a lumbering elephant pushed through the narrow street, the beast's mahout, turbaned and perched securely high upon the animal's leathery back, shouting down warnings, and often obscenities, to the milling press of foot walkers. Francis smiled with sad wistfulness as he contrasted the palanquins of wealthy ladies, wives of government officials or successful merchants, with the destitution of the paupers living in the streets and with the slave markets past which the curtained and perfumed palanquins were drawn. In the eyes of the women's native footmen, running ahead of the carriers to clear a way, the priest saw nothing beyond dull attention to a task at hand.

"This," he breathed to himself, "is India. This is the land, the people, the objective for which I have trained. Dear God, help me to understand all of this. To grasp all of this."

There was continual new discovery, new and strange elements in the kaleidoscopic picture presented by this people into whose midst he had come.

The great *sombreros*, the umbrellas beneath which the merchants sold everything from bamboo poles to live fish. The flapping sunshades were often six to eight feet in diameter. Little evidence showed itself of the treaty with native princes, prohibiting kidnapping of their subjects for the slave markets. With monies received for trafficking in human beings, Portuguese dealers could build the inner gardens, lush and resounding with the cries of exotic birds, which were considered proper to the home of men of means. The half-naked coolies plodded beneath outsize burdens. Behind them walked in haughty self-satisfaction the Mohammedan dealer, congratulating himself upon the wide market for his

white draperies; or the dour-faced but shrewd Armenian dealer, swathed in his long kaftan and inwardly meditating upon the current market price of purple silk or of the cotton sarongs. The latter would always bring good prices from the Malayan or Malabar merchants. Small groups of Eastern corsairs looked with contempt upon the shop-confined dealers. The adventurous corsairs, indifferent to city life, moved quickly through Goa's streets. Waiting for their rough advances were the women of the shadowed back rooms in the alleys leading from the principal streets. Occasionally, with coarse indifference to their recognizable objective, some of these women wandered along the streets, identifiable by their short silk or cotton jackets and the petticoats of bright color, and the small arsenal of brass or imitation gold jewelry hung about their dress and person.

"These women, too," Francis told himself, "even these, no matter how low they have fallen, must be brought to Christ. They glance at me, then look away. To them I'm little more than another 'holy man,' someone utterly alien to their thoughts. But their souls are yet precious to God. For such as these, something must be done."

Odd were the sounds of Goa. Against the strokes of the noonday *Angelus*, pealing from the tower of the Franciscan church through the hot midday air, sounded the deep booming of the pagoda gongs. Croaking Indian crows lent monotonous strident calls as they swept across roof tops; and from the water's edge came the mournful tolling of ships' bells.

It was at night, during his few hours of sleep, that Francis, in his soul, seemed to hear the challenge offered him by Goa, this city where so much opposed all for which his missionary soul hungered: "You are welcome to my shores, Francis Xavier, as are all men. Some men call me 'The City of Sin.' But do not mind that. After all, I am the crowded capital of the Portuguese empire here in the East. These Europeans are just as bad as my native sons. And often they are worse. Ask the Hindu slave girls, stolen from their thatched cottages along the west shore, down as far as Cape Comorin. A man must have his play, no? They steal the pearls from the Paravas. How else can they buy their silks and these beautiful brocades you have seen streaming from my balconies?

"Look at my bazaars, Xavier — all the porcelains of China, the spices and whatever beauty can be wrested from the jungle. They are all here in the shaded stalls lining my streets. Maybe you resent the stench also in my streets. But the Buddhist temples send their incense out upon the heated air to counteract the odors.

"Don Pedro da Gama will leave me now, and your De Souza will replace him as Viceroy. You know the reason, of course. King John, your Christian king, is not satisfied with Da Gama — he did not call for enough pearls from the natives. 'Tribute,' you call it in the West. Don Pedro was too kind to the natives here, and kindness is out of place. You cannot be kind here, Francis, for this is a man's world and I am a man's city.

"Make me your own, Francis. Throw in your lot with me, and take me as I am. For you cannot change what has stood through centuries. I will give you pleasures you never dreamed possible. You, too, can become wealthy, as others have done. Don Pedro complains there is no justice left in the East. But we who are clever, we make our own justice. Is it not so? Even if you get in trouble, the right amount of money can always buy you a way out of it.

"I am Goa — mistress of the East. As your friend I can be the strongest support you can have. But if you cross me and my ways and customs, Xavier, I warn you that men do not succeed in thwarting me. I have broken such men in the past; I will break you rather than surrender to you."

Francis felt the challenge the city offered him. A struggle against odds was neither new nor intimidating for him.

Where to begin?

With the children, as always. The children were not only the hope of the future; through them he could reach the parents, or at least such parents as were assailable. He would begin as the patient, understanding schoolmaster and adviser of little boys and girls. Children in India were like children elsewhere. In that belief, so soon to be proved in actuality, Xavier began his Far Eastern mission career. Close to the children, moreover, were the slaves and attendants assigned to many of the offspring of men of means. These, too, he would win to his cause.

The bell. In all accounts of Xavier in the Orient the bell plays

a prominent part. Like "a muffin man," the priest, a large bell swinging in his hand, moved through the streets of Goa. In a noisy city it elicited from many merely a glance of curiosity. Francis knew, however, that children are fascinated by bell ringing. They run from games to dance at the heels of the man who swings the bell. Pointing, laughing, gesticulating, the boys and girls, some of them little more than infants, clustered about this strange European man in the long soutane. He smiled at them as if he rang the bell just to please them. To call them. Brown children, black children, white children, swarms of them trailed after the marching, laughing priest. Passersby stood aside to let the odd little army pass.

"Now, my little friends . . ."

Francis spoke to them in his never perfect Portuguese *patois*. He told them of God and of Christ. Of the Mother of God and the dear saints, all of whom wished to have these children as their favorite younger brothers and sisters. The wonderful guardian angels who, unseen but very close, watched so carefully over children. With angels watching, how could one do anything bad? The right kind of children—and who wanted to be any other kind?—were always obedient, always truthful, always modest and kind. Boys and girls, too, could persuade their fathers and mothers to go to the holy Mass in the church on Sundays and on the feast days. Church on Sunday is really more important, isn't it, than sitting here beneath the tree's shade in the little park, even if we *are* talking about how much God loves us because He made us? Church is God's house. And our blessed Lord, who always called the children of Galilee and Jerusalem to Him before the grownups, our Lord is in the little Host in God's house. So that's why all really good Catholics *want* to go to church on Sunday. And, more than that, they try to visit Him in the church, even at times during the week. Like on their way from the shops or the docks.

"Tell us more, Father Francis!"

It became a familiar cry from young lips. Standing by, casually and in idle curiosity at first, adults listened to the talks the kindly man gave the little ones. There was, even if one did not

wish to acknowledge it at first, a compelling quality to the words of this man. "It's just as if he was talking to *me*," a listener would observe, "instead of to those children squatting on the ground all around him."

Children vied with each other to hold the umbrella, most necessary against the midday sun, above the priest's head while his hands demonstrated the use of the rosary to his audience. The smile was ever upon his lips, save when he spoke, sorrowfully, of the suffering of their Friend Jesus. And how sin and wrongdoing, even by children, hurt *Him* so much. Did the children like to sing? Splendid. We can all sing the *Creed* or the *Pater Noster* together. Father Francis can teach children to sing in a way that will be heard up in heaven itself.

"I even taught them to sing, or chant, the Commandments," Francis said, "so that they might more easily learn them. And once a child has learned a song or a chant, he has learned it forever."

Later on, this singing of the Commandments was extremely popular with the unlettered fishermen along the seacoasts. The fishers sang the hallowed words while casting their nets. Their wives chanted them, after Xavier's teaching, while mending their men's nets. Farmers went about their seeding, chants and hymns on their lips while Xavier waved approval from the edge of a field. The songs and chants were a welcome feature of his apostolate to Francis himself. Singing is easier than speaking in a language not one's native tongue.

Francis Xavier (some biographers have said with hopeful flourish) had the "gift of tongues." And this was of *such* great assistance as he roved about the other side of the world, handling the multiplicity of dialect and language among so many diversified peoples and nations.

Alas, as Francis would have been first to point out, this was simply not the case. Bilocation, an extraordinary gift enjoyed by a mere handful of saints, he did have. But facility in language was never a *forte* of Xavier. It did not depress him to struggle with strange idioms and tongues, but it did make his missionary work more difficult. At one time he first met the Paravas, poor and unlettered, men whose knowledge of the Catholicism they

had received from the Portuguese was extremely limited. Many had accepted the Faith with the sole intent of insuring Portuguese protection against marauding Arabs. "I just couldn't understand these Paravas," Francis recorded wistfully, "nor could they understand me, because their own tongue is Malabar and my own is Basque."

At another point in his career in the Orient Francis wrote, concerning another race of people: "I enter among these folk with no interpreter beside me. . . . You can visualize the exhortations I'll be trying to give, the people not comprehending what I say and myself understanding them even less. . . . Fortunately for the work of baptizing the new infants brought to me, no interpreter is necessary. Again, the poverty-stricken are able to have me appreciate their sad plight without an interpreter, for I can observe their troubles for myself."

Xavier well understood more than anyone else the vast amount of work that lay ahead of him following his arrival at Goa. For the years of labor in a vineyard so vast he needed all the ardency of his nature to yearn hopefully toward it. Only one who has lived in a foreign country for a brief time, not knowing the language of the place, can appreciate the exasperation, at times the sense of weary futility, which comes upon one in trying to make oneself understood. It was not only necessary to make himself understood, but understood when he was attempting to "put across" a message and an invitation quite unwelcome to his listeners.

His method, successful in certain instances, is outlined in a seventeen-page letter to his Rome confreres. Reading it, one does well to recall that the particular case history was repeated again and again, in one country after another.

First, select a few clever natives who know something of a language known to the missionary (with Francis, Portuguese). Then say over and over to them, in that language, the words for the Sign of the Cross, the Creed, the Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Angelic Salutation, and other prayers. Thereupon these natives put the prayers, slowly and deliberately, into the general language of the region concerned, while the missionary watches them, listening carefully, and so learns the prayers now converted

into the regional language or dialect. Thus, with much effort, Francis, first applying this process, learned how to translate his prayers into Tamil.

"Thus," he says, "after many sessions together, and much work, I put together the prayers. When I had them by memory, I walked through the whole area, ringing my bell, summoning all the boys and men who would come. Thereafter, I taught them twice every day for a month."

An inept observation upon this process of Xavier might express amazement that a former professor, once of the University of Paris, had the patience to carry out this painful process. Such reflection would forget his zeal for souls.

Always it was the work with children which marked the high point of joyousness in teaching. "They crowd me so," he wrote to Ignatius, "that I can hardly say my Office. When I would eat or sleep, there they are — clamoring for me to teach them more prayers. It is in such moments that I realize indeed that 'of such is the kingdom of Heaven.'" Xavier goes on to explain how he charges the children to repeat what they have learned to their parents. And to urge their fathers and mothers to come and listen to the priest.

How does a strange missionary, a newcomer, teach the children of natives their lessons in religion?

"In the first place, I speak the words of the First Commandment. Then all my listeners repeat it after me. Thereupon, we say in unison: 'Jesus Christ, Son of God, grant us the grace to love You above all things else.' Following this request, we say the 'Our Father' together. Then, 'Holy Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ, win for us the favor from your Son to be enabled to keep this First Commandment.' And so on, down through all the Commandments. Afterwards, a dozen 'Our Fathers' and 'Hail Marys,' each in connection with the articles of the Creed. We are always asking the Lord God to grant us strength to believe what we learn and to accept it without doubt. And, of course, grace to carry out the Commandments in our lives."

The reader of what is between the lines catches a glimpse of work at once monotonous and wearisome. It was characteristic

of Xavier that he loved this work. The man of vision saw beyond monotony into eternity. Souls were to be salvaged through human means, through the dull mechanics of human instruction. But the result was as satisfying as anything a priest of God could possibly desire: more souls won to Christ, won to grace, and earmarked for heaven.

Always the vastness of the "fields white to the harvest" was present to him. It haunted his waking, and frequently his sleeping hours.

"So often it suggests itself to my mind," he cries out with zealous passion in this same letter, "to return whence I came, to go especially to the halls of the University of Paris! There I would shout loudly, like a man in frenzy, shouting to Sorbonne men, men with more education than desire to employ their learning usefully, to make them understand how many human souls are losing salvation, how many lost into hell, because of their indifference." Thereupon, in the same letter, follows the celebrated touch, the glimpse Francis gives of the extent of his wearisome labors: "Those who come to our faith, here in this land, this area of my wandering, are so many that frequently my arms are exhausted with the baptizing—and I find myself with no voice remaining because of so often repeating the Creed and the Commandments."

Wisdom herself, fashioner of all things, has been my teacher.

The scriptural Wisdom bespeaks the mind of God who is all truth. With human intelligence, essentially limited but nonetheless elevated by grace, Francis Xavier grasped the lesson God poured into his soul. The benighted slaves and peasant folk of steaming India were possessors of souls created by the same God who fashioned the souls of Sorbonne professor and student. The soul of the slave was immeasurably higher than that of the professor if, indeed, the slave were in sanctifying grace and the pedant was not.

Souls. It was always, first and last, the *ratio determinans* of Francis' planning: souls created by the good God. Souls, for whose salvation Christ hung upon the tree. Souls which might, if Xavier were constant, reach the beatific vision. Souls, if we can so speak,

were his "magnificent obsession." The desire for them was a flame to consume him and drive him forward, impatient and, given half a chance, irresistible.

One thinks of the frequently cited month spent wandering up and down the ragged roads of Travancore. In that month he baptized some ten thousand persons. The figure still amazes everyone. But, as Broderick notes, "This was his only mass conversion. And he took infinite pains to see that the new Christians had priests and catechists to instruct them. It was a Pentecostal event which we have no right to criticize in view of St. Peter's example on the first Pentecost Sunday."

In Goa itself Francis had his work cut out for him.

Portuguese officials accepted bribes, bought and sold what they called "justice." Murders were frequent in side streets while the local *gendarmerie*, fearful for their own safety or already bought off, proved conspicuous by absence from the scene of the crime. Excommunications and rebukes leveled by the Bishop were more often than not scoffed at. The reception of the Sacraments had fallen off to an extent that penitents, desirous of going to confession, usually went by night. In this way they did not excite the enmity of their neighbors. How shall men hear the word of God, the Scriptures ask, unless it be preached to them? To his dismay Francis found a woeful lack of preachers. In most of Hindustan the number of priests capable of preaching adequately could be counted on the fingers of two hands.

The Portuguese, Xavier said, must first be converted. Thereafter, the pagans of various shades in the vicinity. Some of the pagans were devil worshipers, not averse to offering the living sacrifice of their own children to Satan. Francis shuddered at the implications. But, nonetheless, his first objective must be the European colony, men whose ways and evil example were destroying baptized Hindus and outraging the better-minded pagans and Moslems.

Francis' daily program, following a night of some four hours' sleep, began with the priest upon his knees. He prayed for guidance for the day lying ahead. Prayer was followed by the offering of Mass. The intensity of his preoccupation with the mysteries of the altar filled with awe the little group of the

faithful who came for the Holy Sacrifice at dawn. "Frequently," one learns, "the Father seemed transfigured at his Mass. Especially at the elevation, when he was seen raised in the air, and a radiant light streamed about his head."

Reference is made in all his biographies to this matter of levitation. It happened during his Mass, and occasionally when he was distributing Holy Communion upon his knees, his usual posture for giving the Bread of Life to his people.

A short stay at the hospital to attend the needs of the sick. Then forth to the leprosarium, just beyond the city's limits, to bring something of cheer and consolation to the outcast diseased. Back into Goa's streets, begging from door to door for the needs of paupers, the diseased, the prisoners, and the lepers. Filling his garment's folds with vegetables and fish that others might have the little needed to maintain life. Francis notes his satisfaction in persuading the Viceroy himself to come personally to visit the hospitals and prisons at least once a week. It was "a new thing," something men doubted Francis would achieve. But the Viceroy came for his inspections. And later King John prescribed such practice for the next Viceroy, Joam de Castro.

"It is for you, Father Francis," the friendly De Souza pointed out, "that I do these things."

Francis nodded thoughtfully. "For love of God, I trust. But there is much more your Excellency can do while you are in Goa. Marriage laws, for instance. Marriage contracts mean as little as business contracts, even here in our capital city. If one of your own officials writes to Lisbon to complain, as often as not he is knifed or garroted for his pains."

"You think, Francis, you, or even the two of us together, can remedy this widespread corruption?"

"One does what one can." Francis' gaze traveled from the arched doorway of the prison to the Oriental spires of distant wealthy homes. "One does it, and leaves most of it to God to finish. He knows that the Europeans here are their own worst enemies. And they are the worst enemies of the people of India, and especially of the faith you and I profess to believe. But, let us take heart, sire. If we will do our part, God will do His. We must *work*."

[Chapter 11]

CAPE COMORIN AND THE PEARL FISHERIES

Francis, it need scarcely be said, did more work for the betterment of the people of Goa than did De Souza. The Viceroy did not differ much from his predecessors in office, in spite of his assurances to the priest. He was not above accepting bribes. Nor, for that matter, of refusing them, if he had a profitable purpose. On one occasion he refused a bribe to prevent the destruction of a temple. He had heard reports of great treasures buried within the temple; as a result he, with his workmen, passed a whole night digging up courtyards and paving stones, interrupting their labors to torture the helpless Brahmins to learn their "secret." The effort was useless. No treasures were found.

Both natives and Europeans resented the Viceroy's incessant intrigues and wrangling with native elements. The soldiers detested him because of seizure of food rations allotted to the troops. His tenure of office grew continually distasteful to De Souza himself. Francis Xavier irritated him with frequent rebukes touching corruption of civil servants under the Viceroy's command.

When De Souza's three-year term of office finished he was quite content to return to Lisbon. His basic instincts were in the direction of righteousness and good living: he had helped Xavier on numerous occasions. The Viceroy, Francis understood, was good, but weak. "I don't dare govern here in India," the troubled Governor admitted, "because the men here have become so divorced from truth and a sense of honor."

Meantime, until his departure from Goa at the end of September,

1542, Francis was an active and familiar figure in all parts of the city. His followers grew in numbers, won by the selfless sincerity and godliness of this strange European figure.

"O cherished friends of Jesus Christ," they heard him call, moving through the streets and ringing his hand bell, "for the love of your God send to me your children, your slaves be they men or women, to listen to the catechism of the Christian religion!" The adults, many of them, brought their slaves and their children. The crowd, the missionary at its head, marched into the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary, not far from the hospital. Once inside, Francis taught prayers and Commandments, hymns and virtues. The Bishop, seeing what could actually be achieved, issued directives to all priests of God to imitate Father Francis.

The result consoled the missionary. Lectures and instructions, by various priests, increased within the churches. A new atmosphere, a change in tone in the life of Goa began to manifest itself. Something of a faith once treasured and callously discarded came alive in the souls of the Portuguese. The natives, religious by natural instinct, flocked to Xavier in droves. The numbers of baptisms, confessions, and communions rose higher and higher. On Sundays, Francis preached before the Viceroy and the officials of the Governor's suite. Reproving the vices of such men, men whose responsibility outweighed that of most others, was a frequent phase of his sermons. His earliest biographers report his success — many hardened officials discovering their "hearts melting like wax" beneath the eloquent and grace-filled appeals of the priest.

The language became more familiar to Francis. Preaching to crowds of Indian Christians and pagans, he spoke in the mixed dialect, an amalgam of Portuguese interlaced with Malayan and Hindu words. This particular dialect was spoken generally in the East Indies and was well adapted to crowds containing many transient merchants and sailors. In later years Francis mastered the vernacular used in southern India to an extent that he could converse and preach fluently in it.

An ecclesiastic, named Joam Vaz, who had spent six months with Xavier, brought word back to Rome of Francis' work as

seen at first hand: "Father Francis almost invariably went barefooted," he reported to the Fathers of the Society. "His dress was that old, ragged soutane. To shield himself from the sun he usually had a sort of black-stuff hood. Everyone loves him in Goa. He's called now 'the Great Father.'"

Another report, found in a letter from Goa to Ignatius in Rome, written by the pen of Father Lancilotti, bespeaks the people's affection for their priest. "Francis has won all hearts. His preaching, catechizing, administration of sacraments — these have made his name great in this part of India."

Once Francis decided to make his appearance more similar to that of the other priests in Goa. He requested, from the steward of the hospital where he lived, a sleeveless tunic, such as that worn by Goa's priests. After the steward furnished him with one, Francis deemed the coarse garment "too good." He found for himself another, made of the drabest of material. Frequently his friends saw to it that he had a new soutane by the simple ruse of making off with his old one and replacing it with a new one. At dinner, on one occasion with friends, his smiling fellow guests drew his attention to the neat soutane he wore. Francis, who had not noticed the same morning that a switch of soutanes had taken place during the night, blushed furiously. His annoyed expression seemed to say: An enemy has done this. After a moment's discomfiture, however, he began to laugh. "We are told not to take note of what we are to put on," he remarked, "and so I forgive my unknown benefactor."

When he deemed it advisable, Francis did not hesitate to invite himself to meals in certain homes.

"I would like so much," he would say to the host while the two men ate and conversed, "to see your children. Could they be brought in?"

"But of course. Although it is not usual."

"Thank you." Then, almost casually, Francis would go on. "And, to be sure, their good mother, too."

Xavier knew, for instance, that the mother was in the status of a slave, a poor woman who never hoped to enjoy the position of wife and mistress of the household. When the mother and

children entered, Francis would make much of them. The children, as usual, would climb upon his knees and he would hold them while he spoke graciously to the shy mother, standing at a respectful distance from the two men.

When the woman and children had bowed and left, Francis would study the stem of his wine glass thoughtfully. "You know," he would say, "you have beautiful children!"

"Really? You think so? It is most kind." The host's pleasure would mount visibly.

"Oh, indeed, yes. And their mother, she is a lovely creature, too. One of the prettiest and most modest women I've seen here in Goa."

The other man, surprised, would spread his hands. "You startle me, Father Francis. I had not thought of her in quite that way."

"But you should. In fact, if I had such a mother for my children, I wouldn't be happy until I'd given her the title of wife. I'd want her sharing my life, my plans, all my desires, as wife. Not as servant."

"Oh!" The host would frown, considering. "Well, it is at least worth thinking about."

So the conversation would end. But frequently it proved, in the event, a telling blow Francis made for the marriage bond. In such casual ways he frequently began the rectifying of a marriage. At other times he would sharply criticize the appearance or the manners of some woman. It would be in a household where both wife and concubine enjoyed the same favors. The unlawful union would be singled out, in words carefully chosen by the priest, for slighting or implicit criticism. If he thought it would be better, Francis' criticism was explicit and outspoken. The end results were frequently what he desired, the untangling of unlawful and sinful alliances. Or the restoration to her proper dignity of a woman whose position as wife and consort had been taken from her.

The work in Goa, during the first stay of five months, drew to a close. Churches knew large congregations now. Through Francis' ability to be "all things to all," disputes were settled. Stolen goods were returned to rightful owners. Torture of slaves decreased. Alms were collected for the sick and destitute.

"If I could have been in ten places at once," Francis told Ignatius in a letter, "I still would not have lacked for things to do."

There were other areas, moreover, where there were "things to do." Francis had been questioning visitors and officials about districts and the long line of seacoast villages.

In early September the Viceroy sent for Xavier. "Father Francis, the time has come to send you, even though we hate to spare you from Goa, to the district of Cape Comorin, down to the south at the bottom of this vast Indian peninsula. Many Christian natives are there, but they have not seen a priest for generations. You are needed more than we realized."

"That is so, your Excellency." Francis already, in his mind, was seeing the long journeyings necessary to reach the multitudes far to the south.

"I must," he said slowly, "undo so much of the damage that has been wrought by the Moslems."

In the sixteenth century, especially among the peoples of Spain and Portugal, there was an inherited antipathy toward the "sons of the prophet." Children growing up were but a few years removed from the final conquest which kept the Mohammedan from overrunning their native peninsula. When some, in maturity, traveled to the Eastern colonial empire, moving along the upper east African coast, sailing around Cape Comorin, and on to Malacca, they were conscious of the unending conflict between the Cross and the Crescent. Through the East was heard the cry, that call that sounded from the minarets in Arabia and elsewhere: "Mighty is Allah — and Mohammed is his prophet!" The spreading of the faith, through the East, meant contact with the fruits of Mohammedan teaching. The weak Christians were known to have abandoned their faith and cast their lot and religious life with the worshipers of Allah. The Holy Father in Rome, knowing the need for missionary work, granted special spiritual rewards to all "who go to the Indies, and stay and return or die in struggling for the spread of the Faith."

Now he would come closer to the enemy, Francis told himself. Away from Goa, where at least there had been found the external

and visible trappings of Christianity, in the form of large churches and the presence of priests, he would be even more of a lone missionary.

Would the loneliness, the labors, daunt him? Even to raise the question is to underestimate the man. The love for the crucifix, firing his boyhood days at the castle of Xavier in Navarre, was higher now in manhood, high indeed beyond the comprehension of historian or biographer.

"Those who rejoice in the Cross of our Lord Christ," he wrote to Ignatius in Rome, "discover their true haven in meeting pains, while apart from pain everything seems death itself. Can one think there is a worse death than, having once known Him, to desert Him in order to seek one's own beliefs and fancies? No other anguish, truly, is as great as that. How much peace, on the contrary, lies in living a daily dying, crushing our own natural wishes, pursuing the things not our own but of Jesus Christ!"

Such was the man and priest who, in September, set forth for the lands adjacent to Cape Comorin. Micer Paul and Mansilhas had not yet arrived in Goa from Mozambique and Francis could not delay departure. He would take with him two native deacons, who spoke Portuguese, and a third young man in minor orders.

The true missionary is a man impatient of small objectives. The larger perspective concerns his planning. As Francis left Goa his mind was satisfied on two important counts. First, the cause of training native clergy was advancing in the capital of India. Second, while he had been satisfied to begin his Indian activity with reforming Europeans, his greater objective in the Orient was the multitude of souls yet unbaptized.

Before leaving Goa upon the first of the thirteen trips (made between September, 1542, and December, 1544), Francis sent word to the Society at Rome of the College of Santa Fe. The institution had been founded shortly before by Miguel Vaz, formerly a Franciscan friar, now vicar-general of the Indies. Assisting Vaz in directing the college was Diego de Borba, both men conceiving the college as training ground for native boys desirous of becoming priests. In turn, these students, ordained to the priesthood, would

spread the Faith among their own people, assisted by native catechists and interpreters. Only a missionary can properly estimate the help given, today as formerly, by these lay assistants.

The project of Santa Fe heartened Xavier immeasurably. The long-range planning behind its establishment boded well for the future of religion.

Vasco da Gama's son, Estaban, had helped the project with alms and official favor when he was governor at Goa. Monies were turned over to the college directors, sums taken from confiscated pagodas.

To Ignatius, Francis reported the offer extended by the college to himself. Would not Xavier, a professor formerly in a great educational center, join the faculty? The sixty boys already enrolled could profit greatly from instructions such a priest-professor might give. "I refused," Francis said, "with an understandable reluctance, but without hesitation. My approaching work lies not in Goa, but in the further fields. But I beg that members of our Society might be sent here. Especially needed is a preacher who could give the *Spiritual Exercises* to priests. Or provide instruction in the Scriptures, or concerning the Sacraments. I ask this inasmuch as the priests coming to these parts are not well educated."

This appeal for European priests was to be repeated again and again during Xavier's years in the East. At the present time, however, his thoughts were more than six hundred miles away. He completed his preparations, never extensive, for the ship voyage to the pearl fisheries. There awaited him some Christians, but their numbers, as he knew, were dwarfed by the hordes of Paravas sunk in a morass of Hindu superstitions.

Francis sighed, thinking of the complexity of Hindu deities. Prominent were Vishnu and Siva, almost eclipsing all the rest. He thought of Krishna, a deity with countless followers and the subject of a vast mythology. The devotees of Vishnu and Siva, Francis knew, differed greatly in doctrine and belief. They would, however, present the same mixture of indifference, curiosity, and at times opposition to the Christian preacher. The Brahmins tried, not always successfully, to bring the two groups of believers together. Often, when they failed, the union was achieved, at

least temporarily, in a joint antagonism toward any "intruder" in the field of local religion. Among the Hindus, as an obstacle to teaching of the one true God, was a multiplicity of idols, each infused with the spirit of its attendant god.

"Against all of this," Francis told the Viceroy at Goa, "I must work. And, above all, I must pray. God will further the work."

Francis assuaged Borba's disappointment at not being able to hold Xavier for the college by promising that Father Paul could and would join the college faculty when he arrived from Mozambique. The matter settled, Francis boarded a ship leaving for Cape Comorin. It would be a long sailing. Francis, remembering his earlier seagoing, braced himself for another experience as "the worst of sailors." Pirates were not infrequent in the sea lanes the ship would travel, but the thought bothered him not at all. The good God had not brought him all the way from Rome in order to let him perish at piratical hands. Or beneath their knives.

It would be more difficult to receive, or send, letters while away from Goa. Letters from Rome reassured him, however, that, back in Europe, his religious brethren advanced steadily as a new Order. Ignatius had been elected the first General of the Society. His rule was governed by wisdom tempered with love. "He held," says Polanco, "the rudder of this small craft as a father, one who fathered his sons according to the spirit, and won their fullest trust by his wisdom and love." It is interesting to note Peter Faber's wording of his own ballot: "As for the first superior-general to whom we will vow obedience, I cast my vote for Ignatius; and if death should take him from us, which God prevent! I vote for Master Francis Xavier." Ignatius, needless to say, was elected, the only opposing vote on the first ballot being his own.

In 1550 Ignatius offered for approval the completed draft of the Society's "Constitutions." Throughout them it is the "interior law of charity" which is to govern the members. Much work is to be done. Broet will go to establish the Patriarchate of Ethiopia. Jesuits are sent to Ireland in 1541. Some, at the request of Charles V, attend and participate in the second Diet of Worms. Ribadeneira and others lay the foundations in Paris for the college to be

known later as that of Louis le Grand. The work of the members of the young Society at Trent has been well told elsewhere.

Xavier, sailing to Comorin, knew that his Roman brethren were busy beyond expression in furthering the Kingdom of Christ, of which so much is made by Ignatius in the *Spiritual Exercises*. His own task was basically the same. While sixteen scholastics were studying at Paris, sent thither by Ignatius, Francis, the "graduate," was carrying wisdom to souls needing his instruction.

He would go among many peoples. He traveled in their midst (as biographers have recorded) "in bare feet, in a gown badly tattered, simply and humbly, and making jokes with those whom he met." On the ship to Comorin was repeated the shipboard apostolate which marked the earlier voyage to Goa. The ancient Basque proverb, "If you possess, you will need much more," did not apply to Xavier. He had little, practically nothing, in the way of earthly possessions, but from this little he gave much to others. Most of all, his strength, his infectious good humor, and always the spiritual stimulus which changed lives and brought conversion.

Faithful to his vow of poverty, Francis had refused a large sum of money which the Viceroy wished to give him upon sailing. At the moment his sole desire was for the ship's voyage to the Cape. The southwest monsoon was ending and the resultant calmness of water assisted the voyagers. The ship beached at Cape Comorin in early October.

Francis immediately traveled afoot toward the north. With him went the Portuguese and Tamil interpreters. All blessed the shoes brought from Goa, so necessary to protect their tired feet from the burning Fishery Coast sands. Their objective was Tuticorin, which would serve as the missionary's headquarters in the region.

Tuticorin, as well as the tiny fishing villages threaded along the coast line, were more primitive than Goa. For this reason Francis found his work in them more appealing. At least the simple poverty of the fisherfolk precluded the vices and hypocrisies so rife in the country's capital city.

Physical hardship and danger were the priest's constant companions in the sun-baked villages and on the roads. The latter

were usually little more than a series of worn passages through heavily wooded jungle, pathways pressed by native feet and the cart wheels of the Paravas. Rats and snakes were only a part of the animal life on all sides. Sleeping in the open, and indeed often as not sleeping in a thatched shelter, meant a constant warfare with swarms of bugs, inquisitive toads, and the much-respected poisonous snakes of the region.

The Christians among the natives were of the Parava caste. Black-skinned pearl fishers, they sprang from stock first found on the Malabar coast. Europeans in India were never drawn to the area because of its sterile soil. Occasionally, however, white men descended upon the villages, usually from the sea, in order to steal the pearls of the fishermen as well as their daughters. Time and again, during his years in India, Francis protested with vigor and caustic severity these villainies. To the Governor at Goa and the King of Portugal he vigorously pointed out such abominations. With disheartening realization he understood that an end to the abuses would be slow in coming.

Catechizing, preaching with the aid of interpreters, manifesting both love and compassion for the natives, and especially for the sick and the children, Francis moved through the villages. He was as quick to join the fishers in the casting of nets as he was to sit through long night hours with the dying.

Once, entering a village bordering on the Gulf of Manaar, he found to his dismay that no one would listen to him at all. What to do? Even the children were restrained by parents from responding to the call of the stranger's bell. From a native he finally secured the information, given grudgingly, that a woman was sick in one of the little huts. It was his cue. Breathing a prayer, Francis stooped and entered the dying woman's home. His interpreter moved at his elbow.

"Praised be the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," he said, upon crossing the threshold.

Curious villagers, coming forward from the shadowed areas near the hut, clustered outside the open doorway. Members of the woman's family looked up, within the large, almost bare room. Suspicion, and something of fear, stood in the bright dark eyes.

Francis made the sign of the cross, smiling quickly at all in turn. His concern, however, was immediately for the woman lying *in extremis* upon the pallet of dry leaves.

"I will speak with you, daughter," he said, kneeling beside the pallet. He took one thin, emaciated hand within his own hands, patted it reassuringly. The ill woman's eyes opened. She seemed to understand that this was a holy man, a man of God who would help her toward God. Her hand rested confidently in the hand of the priest.

"Explain to her briefly," Francis instructed the interpreter without looking up, "the truths of the Creed. Then we will ask her if she does not wish to go to God, to pass into heaven when she dies. And whether she does not wish to be baptized, for baptism is necessary for all who wish to go to heaven."

There was quiet urgency in his voice. The native deacon nodded. The low-voiced explanations, brief but sufficient, progressed. The sick woman's eyes were closed, but from time to time her head nodded, almost imperceptibly, and the beginnings of a smile of approval touched her features. When the interpreter finished, gently offering the rite of baptism, the tired eyes opened. They sought, then found, Francis' face.

"That is what I want," she whispered.

So it was done. The sides of the room were filled with watchers now. Some knelt upon the matted flooring. Earlier suspicion and antagonism had faded from their faces. Something most beautiful in the message and instruction they had overheard touched deep human chords in their hearts. This man, this holy man, was their friend. Otherwise, would he have troubled to come to them? He has come to bring peace. To bring knowledge of the great God. Now he brings possession of this God to our woman.

"I baptize thee . . ."

The clear words spoken while the water falls from the wet cloth squeezed between Francis' fingers. A soul receives a sacrament and a priest's heart offers up silent but joyous thanks. *Go ye, therefore, into the whole world . . . to all nations, baptizing them.* The ancient charge was executed, carried out in a distant, tiny village of poor people who wrested food from the wide sea.

Emerging into the village area from the little hut, Francis saw a crowd gathered. "Now is the time," he thought. "Perhaps they will listen." The earlier hostility was gone. He addressed himself to the headmen. No, they would not be converted, although they were grateful for his kindness to the poor woman. They would consider him friend. At least, they would not be converted to his religion (although they *had* liked very much what they had heard of it) unless their prince approved. Francis spoke to the native leader, a man whose prime concern seemed to be gathering taxes for the rajah who controlled the town.

"These people," the man said briefly to Francis, "can accept your religion. Why not? It seems to appeal to them. But not myself. I wish no part of it."

The instructions began and the teaching of prayers. The work, handled through the interpreter, took some time. It was worth the effort. Most of the people of the village accepted baptism with happy hearts. Then Francis and his assistants moved on, promising to return at the earliest opportunity.

It was in Tuticorin that Francis first had contact with the Brahmins. They proved aloof, distant, and indifferent. If this Christian priest wished to peddle his spiritual wares, that was his concern. No active opposition would they provide, for the occasion did not warrant such.

"We will listen," some told him, "but you must be willing to discuss philosophy with us, for we are masters of the science."

Francis knew exasperation. He had not come to the East to discuss philosophy. For that he might have remained in the halls of the Paris university. The Brahmins were, he felt, essentially dreamers, whereas he himself was a man of action. He succeeded in converting only one Brahmin although, as so frequently happened, his arm grew wearied with the baptizing of the common people. The problem of caste separated high and low levels of society all through India. But, he told himself, the souls of the fishermen were as precious to their Creator as were those of the Brahmins.

Every village he visits, and later revisits. His Christians put at his disposal a little hut of planks and large dried leaves. It

did not see him for long intervals. Francis was restless, ever on the move. When he could not come himself, to answer a plea for his presence, he sent his crucifix, or a rosary blessed by himself. "Use these," his accompanying message instructed the receivers, "until I can come myself." Then he would be off to some village across the jungle. A little rice, an occasional fish, begged from natives, was his sustenance. The hard training of his body in earlier years served the priest in good stead on his journeys. Sometimes days passed with no nourishment save a little bread and water and sour milk. A few hours' sleep on the floor of a native fisherman's hut. Then, with a boy carrying the crucifix before him, the daily tour of a village. From door to door, seeking out the sick, those who might wish the sacraments, the bodies needing Christian burial. The offering of the Mass when possible and the impatient delays when, assailed by fever, he had to rest an extra day or two in a particular area.

Southern India contained those who resented his coming, his introduction of new religious ways. "We must kill this foreigner," was the whispered agreement among some pagans. Francis smiled grimly when his Christians brought him word of occasional plots against his life.

"Perhaps," he said, "the devil resents my presence. But I will take care. Not for myself, but there is so much work yet to do. The work is only beginning."

One night a breathless Christian raced to the missionary's hut. "Father Francis," he panted, gesticulating wildly, "they are coming! Men — with clubs and knives. They have sworn to kill you tonight!"

The priest moved swiftly. He directed his informant to flee through the dense wood behind his hut. As soon as his benefactor was safely away, Francis extinguished his little lamp, then stepped outside the hut. The starless night folded everything in a great darkness. Francis moved a short distance away, then climbed quickly and silently high into the branches of a tall tree.

When his pagan assailants reached the little clearing, they whispered excitedly to one another. Francis, high above, listening and motionless, sensed rather than understood the import of the low sounds far below him. First, the instructions, the quickly

arranged surrounding of the hut, the attack to follow, the flash of knives within and the death of the priest. The incongruity of the moment crossed the hidden priest's features with an unseen smile. His arms clung to the smooth branch and, offering unspoken prayer for his assailants' welfare, Francis heard, rather than saw, the pathetic steps of the attempted murder's failure. It was all over and done within a few minutes. The low sounds of disappointment, coming from the attacking party as it left the empty hut, faded as the thwarted group moved away into the night.

Should he come down? Francis asked himself. One might as well be prudent. The men might return. Francis sighed, then found himself a suitable crotch of branches. Best to compose oneself as comfortably as possible for the remainder of the night. As the priest fell into a light sleep, the ghost of a smile stood on his face. What (his mind was asking) would your former students at the University of Paris, or indeed the Sorbonne faculty, think of Master Xavier falling asleep in the crotch of a tree in faraway India?

In the morning Francis descended, led his Christians in their devotions, and then set off again afoot for the nearest neighboring village. The fatigue of his daily journeyings, he admits, was ever present. He was the only priest at the time among the Parava native Christians. The faithful numbered some forty thousand. Working to the point of physical and emotional exhaustion frequently breaks a man's spirit and morale. But not in one in whose spirit flamed a desire for more, for more and more souls.

"Think of the great consolation," he writes to the priests in Rome, "which God awards all who travel among the Gentiles, in order to win them to belief in Jesus Christ! One can even say that, if this life does hold any happiness, it can be found in such spiritual joys. Frequently I have heard one, working amid these Christians, exclaim: 'Dear Lord, do not grant me such happiness in this life — or, if your limitless goodness and mercy still flood my soul, take me to the heaven of your glory, for it is too much anguish to live without seeing you.'"

Readers of Francis' letters will not be hard put to discover the identity of the "one working amid these Christians."

Francis frequently reverts to the comparison between work done by educators, those giving earthly instruction to others, and the inestimable privilege of those whose concern it is to instruct souls in the ways of God. "If such worldly teachers, deriving great satisfaction in some learned discovery, sought the same pleasure in teaching others to know and serve God, how much more joyous and how much more ready would they be when God summons them to render an account of their stewardship!"

Basta ya, Señor, basta! — Enough, Lord, enough. . . .

It is the cry which, from time to time, some Christians hear bursting from their priest during his prayers. At such times he appears to be caught up in ecstasy, utterly oblivious of the awe his prayerful presence is creating in those watching or listening to him. With his hand upon his heart, his eyes lifted to heaven, he seems to be lost in communion with God. There are instances recorded when Francis sprinkled water upon his chest, as if the fire of zeal within his heart was intense enough to burn him.

Of these matters, of extraordinary favors granted him by God, Xavier would not speak. Rather, returning to himself, he knew an acute embarrassment, a regret that others, beyond his wishes, had managed to come upon him in the time of his mystical union with his Lord.

The months in the jungles and along the beaches of southern India passed quickly. More than once Francis attempted to break through the wall of Brahmin reserve, but it was a vain effort.

Once, when he approached a pagoda where two hundred Brahmins lived, some came forth to converse with the foreign priest. Xavier gently drew them to admit that little could be said for a religion involving the worship of cows. Thereupon Francis lectured at length to the curious men upon the Creed, the Commandments, and the basic doctrines of Christianity. With Oriental courtesy, the Brahmins acknowledged that there was, truly, much wisdom in the religion from the West. They would, within their pagoda and in the time of prayer, consider this teaching.

They bade Francis farewell. He clenched his fists in the exasperation of the moment. They would, he knew full well, consider the points of Christianity he had explained to them. It would

be only an academic consideration, prompted by intellectual curiosity of a sort which concerns itself with objective weighing of values. There would be nothing of the heart in the analysis of what he had told these men. Even if one, prompted by the grace of God, found himself leaning toward the new faith, there was the obstacle of human respect, the recoil from the prospect of abandoning a comfortable living within the precincts of the pagodas.

Francis returned to the evangelization of the people, the masses, the people of India who were more ready to accept his doctrine and ministrations, once they understood he was the emissary of the one, true God. For them and their children he worked, often late at night after crowded days, to put his teaching into a little catechism in the native dialect. This catechism would be a link binding him to his Christians when he was away from them.

In late December, Francis returned to Goa. His labors near the Cape of Comorin had been heavy. Because of this, he returned from his first truly "missionary" journey with a heart that, conversely, was light.

[Chapter 12]

“AFTER MANY MEETINGS AND MUCH DIFFICULTY...”

In presenting the life of any saint, the recorder is aware of a sense of exasperation and inadequacy. This stems from a keen awareness that his words, perhaps the words of any human biographer, remain unable to capture the inward genius, the flame of grace leaping, unseen, within the soul of his subject.

This applies to the life of a great missionary. Francis Xavier has been ranked “second” to the Apostle Paul among the giant missionaries in the long history of the Church of Christ. In Paul, one at least has much of the Apostle’s own story set down in the Apostle’s own words. Again, the recording by Paul was done under immediate divine inspiration. Had we not known this, it might be deduced, or guessed at. Paul’s account of his own travelings, his exposure to scourging, shipwreck, pursuit, and, worst of all, the solid front of human ignorance and suspicion, these stand alone. They stand beside those sections of his letters which, with unmistakable genius, suggest, rather than visibly demonstrate, the soaring passion of zeal which flooded his restless soul.

Francis Xavier, it is true, stands revealed in the long series of letters sent from the Orient to European brethren, and rulers. There remains, moreover, frequent written comment upon his nature and work, precious comments penned by contemporaries. With these two sources one can reconstruct his labors. More elusive, though not beyond the historian’s grasp, is the inward stature of the man. There is, on the other hand, ever present the pitfall of what has been termed the “encyclopedic” mode of

presentation. This is the type of writing which, duly but with an almost inevitable colorlessness, sets forth: he did this, he did that, he said this, he said that.

How best, then, catch the *stature* of the man? Perhaps, after all, by sensing the *accumulative* effect given by a progress through the successive chapters of that amazing decade Francis spent toiling in the East. When the historian reaches the pitiful closing scene, upon the abandoned sands of Sancian Island, there arises the exclamation: “This has been the record of one man’s work — but, as we use language, it’s almost *incredible!*”

Often, in the saint’s own letters, a phrase is set down which tells more than long paragraphs of carefully detailed recital of labors experienced. Such a simple phrase, already referred to, is one prefacing his account of his methods of overcoming language barriers. “After many meetings and much difficulty . . .”

One must indeed read between the lines. Within a few words lies hidden a story of hours of planning. Of possible systems weighed, of experiments actually begun and later discarded. Of strained patience, and resignation to the good God who wished not to endow Xavier with extraordinary gifts of language.

In the preceding chapter, certain features of the first of the thirteen journeys to southern India and Comorin were indicated. Francis himself might well smile, considering the brief rehearsal of the first expedition outside of Goa, and say: “It is enough.” On the other hand, he would be first to know that the full account had not been written. The same is true of historians’ recordings of the successive chapters in the story of his life in the East, in India, the islands, the straits, and Japan.

For those in later centuries, who read without experiencing, it is necessary to study more and more the account of his life. It is essential to ponder it carefully, weighing the difficulties which the missionary himself would have dismissed with a brief wave of his hand. In human fashion others must scrutinize the successive events, piling one upon another through long years of uninterrupted toil, until at the end the reader grasps the almost overwhelming impact of a career unique in Church history. Perhaps unique in *any* history of men’s endeavor to further a cause.

Xavier's story is such a tale as to capture the imagination. Nietzsche professed to "teach you the Superman" because "Man is something which shall be surpassed." Francis Xavier would have scoffed at the notion of Superman. But he would have ardently championed the *supernatural* man. The Creator works through and with the creature, giving increase and achievement beyond all expectation when human instrumentality is aided and elevated by grace. The human instrumentality was ever at work, relying upon the One who promised, and gave, the increase.

Francis returned from Comorin in December, 1542. A return visit was to be made in 1544, and many thereafter. He wrote to Rome from Cochin, on the northwest shore of the Cape, in January, 1544. His report tells of Father Paul's remaining at the Goa college while Mansilhas accompanied Xavier to the regions of Comorin. The two men were winning conversions to Christianity every day. Francis set up a police system for the natives. He worked late at night, adding to the catechism in the Malabar tongue. Each of the thirty villages along the Fishery Coast had at least one native catechist, trained by Francis to continue instruction after the priest's departure.

"It is truly amazing," wrote Father Beira, two years later upon visiting the Coast villages, "to see the zeal of the youngsters! They come each morning and night to rattle off their catechism and follow its explanation. On Saturdays the women, and on Sundays the men, come to the church for an instruction in the faith, which lasts two hours. The idolatry of the past has been largely eliminated. God has certainly made use of our Master Francis to accomplish much that is good. And when Francis left here to preach in other regions, there was great sorrow. But in the other areas he is again bringing many souls to God."

The approval in the foregoing lines suggests a question which has greatly concerned students of Xavier's life. How *lasting* were the almost countless conversions he achieved?

The matter (in the opinion of the present author) has been well summarized by Martindale when he said that Francis and his fellow-missioners were well aware of the fleeting character of a certain kind of conversion. They were not naïve and their methods

were altogether different from those which effected “curry converts.” Their instructions were accurate and long-continued, and they themselves offered an example of self-sacrifice never matched before or since. When Protestants suggested that the natives change their faith, they were told:

“Work miracles such as Father Francis worked, then we may listen.”

Francis was, indeed, not a man of an inane or naïve optimism. His difficulties were real, present, and continuing.

He himself, for instance, characterized the Brahmins as an evil group of men, preying upon the natives. “If you do not give us what we require of you,” these high-caste poseurs told those beneath them, “you will be subject to the vengeance of our idols. Your holy duty is to contribute to the support of the shrines.” Xavier tells how annoyed the Brahmins were when he exposed their vicious ways to the “little people” of southern India.

“Why not,” the Brahmins asked Francis, “be one with us?”

His refusal exasperated them, especially as they understood his great hold upon the people. To him privately they acknowledged that fraud underlay much of their influence. They sent Francis presents and were angered by his refusal of them. The Brahmins’ professed belief in one God did not hinder the priest from denouncing them to his congregations.

These nominal “holy men,” for the most part, moved quietly through the tiled temple courts of their religion, stepping carefully out of the way of the fat pigeons on the flooring, and indifferent to the exhortation of the Western missionary. In their colleges, the Brahmins were taught never to reveal the “mysteries” of their belief to others. Actually they were instructed in a belief in a single Creator of all things, but this belief was only for the elect. The people were to be left in a worship of numerous idols which in reality represented demons. One Brahmin, enjoying a secret friendship with Xavier, told of the Brahmins’ pause, at certain times of day, for the prayer: “I adore thee, O God, and I ask thy assistance forever.”

It was such knowledge which heightened Francis’ exasperation

with the cultists. There was, he knew, a groundwork of religious beliefs which needed but a little good will for conversion to the true Faith. Francis learned that these men found promise, in their sacred writings, of a time when all peoples would share the same religion.

"Let that day come soon, O Lord!" Francis prayed. "And let that religion be the one, true Christian Faith!"

Xavier, and his religious brethren who continued his work in India, faced the triple obstacle: Brahminism with its caste system, Mohammedanism and its deep detestation of all things Christian, and the continuing immorality of many Portuguese colonials. God, however, favored the missionaries' work. In 1560, for instance, were recorded some 12,967 baptisms in the area of Goa itself. Goa was to be headquarters for the Jesuits in India. The capital city would see the college or seminary for youthful Indians, the priests drawn from native ranks. Here, too, the Society would have a house for the professed and also a novitiate. Not without cause does the Jesuit Order hold in gratitude the initial work of Francis Xavier, begun on the day, many years ago, when he stepped from a ship and entered the capital of India.

India presented itself to Francis as a land whose steaming heats enveloped all types of physical and moral hazards. The snake charmer in the market place awed his audience with his piping while the lifted hooded head of the cobra moved back and forth. The air of little villages was heavy with the scent of cow dung as natives used it to plaster walls of little huts. By night the mosquitoes droned in swarms and bit sleepers. Women combed each other's hair to remove the ever present lice. Scorpions, rats, and snakes multiplied without hindrance. Fakirs walked barefooted upon pointed spikes, their presence heightening the native superstitions. Siva was worshiped by the upper classes, while the lowly born bowed before the idol of Kali. Obscenities were carved into panels on pagan temple walls, often represented in lewd sculptures exposed in countless wayside shrines. The goddess Kali, kind of feature and with four uplifted hands, exacted once a year the sacrifice of a pregnant woman. Religion was for millions something compounded of equal parts of terror and superstition.

Through such a people, in many areas of India, Francis moved ever forward upon his work. It is indicative of the humanity of the man that he knew moods not far removed from depression, which succeeded his customary joyous exhilaration in his labors.

Mention has been made of Francis' habit of "making jokes" with people in all stations of life. There remain, moreover, some twenty-six letters he wrote to Mansilhas, his assistant and catechist with little learning but much heart. These letters show Francis as almost sportive at times. In them he is alternately gay, humorous, and then deeply saddened, sometimes extremely indignant and angry, especially against the Portuguese who mistreated his Paravas. In one letter Francis even expresses the thought that perhaps, in the face of such discouraging obstacles, he might just as well go off to the land of Prester John, where he might find peace in a land "where a man can serve God our Lord with no one persecuting him."

Francis' advice to his catechist, teaching him how to approach and deal with the people of the fisheries, is gently paternal in its ring:

"Learn to be patient with and to help their weaknesses. Hold on to the hope that one day they will be good Christians, even if now they are not. Suppose you do not achieve what you desire with them, what then? Learn to be contented with what you do succeed in doing, even as I have done."

Characteristic, not only of Francis in India but of Ignatius and the first brethren of the Society in Europe, was this patient looking to future fruit gathering. Later on, these men understood, the fruits of their sowings would appear. Good Christians were always the objective. The concept implies as fundamental the solid basis of Christian education, especially of the young.

Seen in relation to the Society's emphasis upon educating "tomorrow's generation," the work of Xavier falls within the general pattern. Educating in Christian living ranged, as Francis knew well, from teaching Parava children to chant in rhythm the phrases of the *Creed* to instructing seminarians in the traditional theology of the Church.

The general pattern referred to deserves a brief consideration.

Its early phases were known to Francis via the correspondence he received from the Jesuits in Europe. He considered the colleges arising in various European centers at the direction of Ignatius. In 1542 the College of Coimbra, in Portugal, had begun its work. In 1546, Francis Borgia was to found the College of Gandia. The College of Ingolstadt opened its doors in 1556. Four years previous a college opened in Vienna, and one year after this the noted Roman College got under way.

The effects of these foundations is understood by every historian who subscribes to the necessity of forming leaders for the social order.

Thus, the student of history applauds the vision of Ignatius in founding in Rome the German College. From its graduates were to come one pope (Gregory XV), 24 cardinals, 6 Electors of the Empire, 19 princes, 21 archbishops, 121 titular bishops, 100 bishops of pagan countries, 6 abbots or generals of religious orders, 11 martyrs to the Faith, 13 martyrs of charity and service.

One might note in passing that within a century and a half, following the establishment of the Society of Jesus, 769 collegiate and university houses of education were established by the Order. However, Ignatius' purpose, in establishing his new Religious Order, was not primarily to initiate a group of *educators*. His first intent, as we have seen, was rather what is called "missionary" in scope: a band of picked, thoroughly trained men, ready and willing to go at the word of the Vicar of Christ to whatever part of the world where there was hope of saving souls. Circumstances, well treated in other authors, directed that the education of the young become a large part of the Jesuit activity in Europe. Ignatius, quick to acknowledge a situation, saw the hand of God in this, and forthwith emphasized Christian education and humanism.

To him, and to his spiritual children, that which mattered most was whatever sphere of activity presented itself as best, at the moment, for securing "the greater glory of God." *Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam*. The nature of the means, or the *milieu*, in which the greater glory of God was to be sought, was secondary.

For Francis Xavier, in the sixteenth century, as well as for today's New York Jesuit missionaries working in the Pacific islands,

the same objective is the norm of activity. This alone explains the joyousness of the missionary in his laborious, monotonous, daily search through jungles and bandit-infested areas of Oriental lands.

The educating task confronting Francis included the breaking down, as much as possible, of the obstinate evil philosophy of many Portuguese in India. The callous and smug philosophy guiding many of these is reflected in the statement of Barros, official recorder of Portuguese activity in India and himself Treasurer of the Indies in 1532: "As rulers of the sea-waves, because of the might of their shipping, the Portuguese can with justice force all Moors and Gentiles to request safe-conduct documents, even under penalty of seizure and execution. These classes of men are beyond the law of Jesus Christ. . . . We, who are Christians, are bound by no obligations toward such as these."

The writer of such fatuous nonsense, words set down under the cloak of religious righteousness of the worst sort, was representative of Portuguese officialdom during the decade preceding the arrival of Xavier in India. One shudders to realize that this *carte blanche* for pillage and thievery is found in official paragraphs. What must have been the excesses to which an officially sanctioned cruelty led, especially when those perpetrating it were far from Goa!

Francis says in part in a letter to Simon Rodriguez: "I am perfectly amazed to see how these Portuguese have found for themselves so many hitherto unknown moods, tenses, and participles of the verb *rapio*."

Rapine there was, and much of it. Ready-to-hand plunder has always drawn the avaricious to whatever area offered it. Plunder meant riches for the colonials, and riches meant a type of power. Thereafter, in the majority of instances, was exemplified the words of Shelley, "Power, like a desolating pestilence, pollutes whate'er it touches."

Epitomizing the clash between Francis and the opponents of the good, whether those opponents be Portuguese or native princes acting under implicit Portuguese sanction, was the massacre of six hundred new Christians on the Isle of Manaar in 1545.

Previous to this crisis, Francis had spent two years and more

on a mission circuit embracing Goa, Comorin, Calicut, Cochin, and other Indian coastal areas. Wherever he went it was the same story of unflagging preaching, bell ringing, the nursing of the sick and dying, and the administration of the sacraments.

His ways took him past Salsette, where Rudolph Aquaviva would afterward fall a martyr. His feet pressed the earth of Canara and Mangalore and Cananon. In Calicut, Francis' voice lifted, protesting the foolish worship of the goddess Dourga. "Take me out on your fishing boats," he urged the natives of the fisheries. The fishermen welcomed this priest, willing to share their labors even when other Hindus looked down upon them. Baptism had made them social outcasts, but what of that? Father Francis spoke the lasting truth and in the Christian religion all men were equal before God. This made life upon earth more worth living.

Important was the missionary's step in securing sanction, from Goa, for Portuguese ships to patrol the seas. These vessels were under directive to prevent any raiding or piratical attacks upon the native villages of the coast. In 1545 Francis was to learn how little the ship captains and crews esteemed the governmental orders.

Upon each return to Goa, Francis was greeted with great pleasure by the Governor, the Bishop, and the colonists. Word of the marvels he worked had reached the capital. Despite his recurrent difficulty with the mastery of languages, there were at least fourteen people who testified later, at the time of canonization, of some extraordinary achievements in Francis' preaching. Witnesses deposed that Francis, while speaking in a single dialect, was understood by members of various racial groups. This was the case in the work he performed in the Malayan archipelago and later in Japan.

There was much to be done during the brief stays in Goa. Conferences with the Bishop, in the interests of his converts; certain legislative acts to be urged upon the Governor; moves to insure the social welfare and betterment of the natives. In 1543 the College of Santa Fe was officially turned over to the direction of the Jesuits. Writing to Ignatius from Cochin, Francis pointed out that he hoped the number of Christians in such cities would be multiplied by means of the students sent to the

college in Goa. Later proof of this was evidenced in a report, sent to Rome by Father Lancilotti, declaring the increased size of the Church, and referring to the college students numbering boys speaking ten different dialects.

It was in Goa, during his second visit, that Francis knelt before Bishop Albuquerque to make his religious profession. The original copy of the offering was forwarded to Rome.

Thereafter Francis set forth, with Mansilhas and three secular priests, two of them natives. They “toured” the fisheries of the coast. Traveling with them, and occasionally left in a mission station to serve as catechists, were several Malabar youths. The priest-leader, moving on, returned later to review the catechists’ work, its advance, and to administer the sacraments. While Francis moved inland, he was accompanied by Juan de Artiaga, a military man become lay volunteer. To Mansilhas, stationed on the coast, Francis sent, when opportunity arose, letters of encouragement. He understood, better than others, the tendency in Mansilhas to fall into moods of discouragement and the man’s violent temper when exasperated.

These letters remain as a precious part of the *Monumenta Xaveriana*. Francis’ understanding, almost paternal concern for his lieutenant’s peace of mind and devotion to duty under tropic skies and in the face of moral opposition, are perhaps a reflection of the encouragement he himself received (and asked for!) in the letters coming to him from Ignatius. Their underlying message is always the same: *patience*. In simple sentences, Xavier urges the inward joy of the apostolate, the confidence in God which enables the missionary to smile in the face of current obstacles, and the zeal which must be enkindled in the necessary periods of prayer.

These letters help historians to capture glimpses of the *humane* facets of Francis’ character.

How is little Matthew, your boy-helper? I remember so well the day I baptized him. Be sure that he has sufficient clothing and any other necessities. I will reimburse you for any expenditures. Tell him, dear Mansilhas, that if he’s a good boy always, I’ll bring him a present when next I return. Don’t forget, yourself, to stop as much as you can this dangerous habit of the natives, in drinking

that vile arrac which does them no good and much harm.

But the children, of course, these must always be our first concern. I still approach them first, and I believe our Lord wishes it to be so. Do not be too concerned about my health. Those few days in Nares, when I was fevered and bled, they were nothing. Oh yes, I almost forgot to tell you: Father Coelho is sending you two lovely parasols. Meantime we both hope to see you soon in Puncial.

Meantime you would be saddened to see what the robber horsemen have been doing in this area. They're mostly of the Badaga tribe, and I'm afraid we'll continue to have more trouble from them. At times they leave the poor natives terribly impoverished, or their little villages destroyed. Some of these natives, as a matter of fact, are in such poor condition that we're sending them on to Manapur. We'll use the same boats we used to bring them food. Do take good care of these folk. As for the others, we're trying to make sure that the patatins [village headmen] don't approach those who are very poor when these officials collect alms.

But oh, my friend, what shall we say about the Portuguese! From them we should seek support, but they prove increasingly our great obstacle in the work for these people. The kidnapping of the slaves goes on in these native states. Even the servants of the king of Travancore have been stolen. And all this continues.

So the varied messages run on. The letters were not long but numerous. In them one sees the character of the writer, the little revealing touches which define the warm and fraternal manner of his dealing with associates. The concern for the children and the dismay, but never despair, at the prospect of taking issue with men of evil intent. To read the letters is to see Xavier as the man of action and to understand the methods he found successful. Their value to later missionaries it is impossible to estimate.

Travancore was visited by Xavier in 1544. This picturesque, palm-shaded land, rich in soil, was the sort of romantic-looking area which Europeans envisioned when they thought or speculated upon the supposed exotic regions of the East. Backing the region,

the high, weird, jagged, rocky ranges rose as a natural wall to separate Travancore from the eastern half of southern India. Along the water's edge were many lagoons, receiving the changing tides of the Indian Ocean, and sending inland small waterways overhung by the cocoa trees, banians, and the ever present curve of leaning palms. Into some of these lagoons and waterways, Francis Xavier entered via the enormous barks, hollowed from cottonwood and reminiscent of Venetian gondolas.

In Travancore Francis sought, and received, permission from the Rajah to instruct the people in the Christian Faith. The prince's favor was granted, not so much because of feelings of friendliness toward this foreigner, but because Francis had the good will and friendship of the Viceroy in Goa. The Rajah knew that he needed, to preserve his command, the Viceroy's support against periodic uprisings of his temperamental vassals.

Thirty villages in the region saw and heard Francis upon this visitation. The procedure of teaching and establishing small units of Christians was followed here as elsewhere. Mention is made of an occasion when Francis actively protected his new Christians from Moorish corsairs. The attackers, coming to plunder, found the "holy man" kneeling amid his converts. Francis, having heard of the Moslems' approach, and knowing that armed resistance was both undesirable and impossible, called upon his people's prayers to save the situation.

"Go back," Francis addressed the raiding party, rising from his knees. "Go back and defile not your souls with the stealing you have planned. Return whence you came and do not carry out such wicked designs. If you persist, then know that you expose yourself to the vengeance of the one true God!"

The historian can but wish Francis' complete address to the Moslems were preserved. We know he did command them to desist, and that he threatened them with the vengeance of God. Whatever else formed part of his denunciation we do not know. But desist the invaders did. Cowed by this man of God and his utter fearlessness, they abandoned their intent and sailed from the coast.

Francis worked so tirelessly in Travancore that more than a

majority of the natives embraced the Faith. Sermons usually were given in the fields or on the beaches. Where would one have been able to find a structure to hold crowds of five or six thousand people, coming to hear the priest? Instances are recorded of certain sick people being cured by the blessing of Xavier, while at Travancore.

In the seacoast town of Coulan occurred one of Francis' more amazing miracles. Only a few pagans had been converted, and the priest begged God to assist him. Many, indeed, came to listen to him preach, and, admiring the beauty of the Christian religion, showed little or no desire to adopt it. Francis recalled that, on the day previous, a man had died and been buried.

"We will open the grave," he announced to his shocked hearers. In that hot land decomposition of cadavers advances with great rapidity. Nevertheless the grave was opened, the body exposed. Francis knelt beside the remains, his eyes closed, his whole self wrapped in prayer for divine assistance.

"I bid thee," he said finally to the corpse, in the midst of a great silence, "to return to life, thus manifesting the power of the Christian faith."

The dead man stirred and the body coloring changed. Onlookers trembled visibly, clutching one another, staring with wide, fascinated eyes. The dead man came to life, moved, flexed, and stretched his limbs. Francis took him by the hand and he arose, bewildered but smiling in friendly greeting.

The word of this miracle raced throughout the area. It was a marvel which influenced thousands in their acceptance of the Christian religion preached by this wonder-working priest.

At the time of the canonization process of Francis, one of his attendants, or servants, told how a cobra bit another boy sleeping beside him in a Fishery Coast cabin. The bitten boy died. In the morning Francis Xavier, told of the event, went to the hut, took the dead boy by the hand and in the presence of a small and bewildered group of people brought him back to life and health.

Another witness bespoke the occasion when an attendant of the saint was bitten by a poisonous snake on the road to Coimbatour. The man fell, quickly rendered incapacitated by his swelling

foot, then unconscious as the poison spread through his system. Runners brought the news to the missionary. “Bring the man here,” Francis directed. When the unconscious victim was carried to the priest, the missionary touched a little saliva to the swollen foot. Immediately the man’s consciousness returned, the swelling subsided, and complete health soon returned.

Francis would not speak of his miracles. That he permitted those who beheld them to “spread the word” testifies to his common sense and his apostolic over-all purpose. He knew that no word from him could restrain the overwrought natives from telling, far and wide, the circumstances of these wonders. More important, Francis was wisely aware of the helpful effect these reports would have upon many pagans, attracting them to the missionary and his message. And, as so often proved to be the case, to the reception of the waters of baptism.

Meanwhile the round of missionary circuits was completed and new souls were being received into the Church. Further instructions were advanced by catechists trained for the work. Certain native boys were prepared to go even to Goa for courses at the college.

The last months of 1544 and the beginning of 1545 were now approaching, a period of time within which Francis was to suffer much and joyfully see fruit of his labors. These months demonstrated to him how ephemeral were men’s promises and, although the matter did not appeal to his natural tastes, how much he must struggle to protect the rights of his native Christians.

In August, 1544 (although some biographers place the time a bit later), Francis was brought an invitation from the islanders of Manar. This small island stood to the northwest of Ceylon, and its inhabitants had heard much of the new religion the priest was preaching upon the Indian mainland. Would Father Francis come to preach to them in Manar?

Francis hesitated. He was, at the time, busy making arrangements which were aimed at protecting the Paravas from the raiding Badagas. These warrior tribesmen from the state of Madura made periodic raiding assaults upon the coast dwellers, often forcing the helpless Paravas to seek temporary refuge in the small islands off

the coast while the bandits despoiled their villages. The invitation to Manar came at an inopportune time.

Francis resolved the matter by writing to Mansilhas. That worthy was instructed to leave for Manar as soon as conveniently possible. Would there be trouble? Probably not; the ruler of Negapatam was friendly, and he was respected by the rajah of the neighboring kingdom of Jafnapatam. Manar, standing not far off shore from these two domains of southeastern India, was controlled by Jafnapatam. The new converts of Manar would not lack for protection should any trouble arise because of their conversion.

So Francis believed. It was to prove a sad and costly error of judgment.

Mansilhas, busy with his own work, was not free to go immediately to Manar. He sent, however, a native priest. The latter's name is not handed down; he is believed to have been an interpreter accompanying Francis on his initial visits to the fisheries. One account has the man as Xavier's first convert in Goa. In any event he began the work of conversions in Manar, in October, in the absence of Xavier and Mansilhas, and Providence blessed his efforts. Six hundred islanders embraced the Faith.

Thereafter the martyrdom ensued. Manar's position, as part of the Ceylon "group," caused Francis, when the bloodshed ended, to exclaim: "Ah, Ceylon, Ceylon! How much blood of Christians shalt thou cost!"

The ruler of Jafnapatam, learning of the conversions, became fearful that they would lead to Portuguese seizure of his domains. The converts were given a choice: renunciation of their new religion or death. Grace and new-won strength responded with loud answer: death rather than apostasy. As knives of execution were drawn against them, certain mothers lifted their infants. "See," they cried, "our babies! Take these, too, for they are also Christians."

The martyrdom, when word of it reached Francis, filled him with sadness for the crime, but the sorrow was assuaged by the new note of joy struck in his apostolic heart. Martyrs had died gladly for the Faith they had received. *The seed of Christians.*

“In His goodness,” Francis exclaimed, “God wishes that we be not left without martyrs!”

The executioners had been startled by the fortitude of the martyrs who perished beneath their knives. One result was the conversion, not only of the Rajah's chief retainer, but also of his eldest son. The youth had been instructed in the Faith by a European merchant. The son's conversion was a standing reproach to the wicked father. The latter, hating Christianity, not only arranged that the young man be murdered in secret, but that he be given a demonstrative pagan funeral. Witnesses, however, wrote to Cardinal Enrique of Portugal that an earthquake ensued, leaving open in the shape of a cross the earth wherein the cremated remains of the prince had been buried. Above, in the air itself, a cross appeared shining. Nor would the attempts to fill the grave again succeed. The phenomena frightened and impressed multitudes. Many, including the ruler's sister and members of her family, embraced Christianity. Certain Portuguese merchants and some Franciscan missionaries assisted the princess to smuggle the new Christians out of the islands. Thereupon these new converts made their way to Francis, who welcomed them as living proof that God, through the blood of the slain, was reaping the fruit of souls in India.

“After much difficulty” the rewards of his labors were beginning to show in the first martyrs.

· [Chapter 13] ·

A MAN IS FOUND IN HIS LETTERS

It is one thing for a missionary to exult, after the event, when newly baptized Christians joyfully accept martyrdom. It would be quite another if the missionary himself took no steps to prevent such tragedy. Francis considered himself the father in God of the Manarese martyrs, even if their reception into the Church had been carried out by his emissary. The native Christian might indeed be willing to turn the other cheek. The office of the priest it was to see to it that persecutors should draw no other swords or knives.

"The Prince of Jafnapatam," Francis declared with emphasis, "must be punished. Otherwise other converts, in other areas, will be disheartened, dissuaded from proclaiming their faith, and temporal rulers will scoff at the rights of God. This massacre of Manar must not be allowed to pass unnoticed."

Francis learned that the King of Jafnapatam had usurped the throne of his brother, now a refugee at Goa. The decision to demand Portuguese assistance in removing the evil Jafnapatam ruler and replacing him, forcibly if necessary, with a Christian rajah, formed quickly in Francis' mind. He walked or voyaged to Cochin, only to learn there that De Souza had departed for Bassein on the northwest coast. At Cochin the priest was joined by the brother of the persecuting Jafnapatam monarch.

"Help me to regain my throne," the Prince urged, "and I will open wide the door to Christianity throughout Jafnapatam. All of my people will embrace your Christianity with open arms."

The promise only heightened Xavier's determination. At this

time his thoughts and desires were turning more and more to Malacca, beyond India itself, and there was little time to spend in delays. Typical of Francis' character was his swift activity, once a decision had been taken, in carrying through his purpose. If Don Martin was at Bassein, thither he would go. Meanwhile, from Cochin itself he sent a long and protesting letter to the King of Portugal. In it he listed the grievances of the missionaries, sent to India in the first place by the Crown. His demands for strong royal mandates, especially to the colonial rulers, guaranteeing particularly the rights of natives, converts and nonconverts, were particularized and emphatic. In the actual order, little or nothing was to come of this letter. Fortunately, at the time, Francis did not realize this.

In the same letter, written in Latin, Francis urged the monarch to send members of the Society of Jesus to the mission field of Malacca and other areas.

An event occurred, during the trip northward to Bassein, which is often recounted. It indicates that Francis, while immediately preoccupied with the welfare of a large group of Christians, was never unmindful of the opportunity for conversion of single souls. Or of winning back to a holy life one who had "fallen away."

An officer of the governmental service laughed openly and sneeringly at Francis' attempts to win him back from a life which had become almost wholly evil. The suggestion that he make a "good confession" was greeted with insulting derision. Francis, turning aside the insult, continued his quiet efforts but to no avail. It was when the vessel stopped for a short stay at Cananor that his opportunity came. "Let us walk together," he invited the officer when the ship's company went ashore, "and see something of this land." The officer shrugged, then acquiesced. When the two men entered a palm grove, Francis suddenly stepped from the pathway while his companion, startled, watched. The priest stripped to the waist, then drew forth a scourge. Falling upon his knees, Francis scourged himself, deliberately, with vigor, and until the blood began to flow from the torn skin of his back.

"My God, Father Francis!" the officer cried in protest, "You must stop this!"

Francis paused, turned friendly and sympathetic eyes upon the man. "I will not stop," he said softly, "until God grants me the grace of your change of heart. Your conversion to the life of grace you have abandoned."

It was enough. The officer, touched beyond our comprehension by the sight of the suffering priest and by the working of divine grace, fell himself upon his knees. "Forgive, forgive," he cried. "I can withstand you no longer. Nor God's goodness. Take me, Father Francis! Hear my confession now."

So it was done. Another soul had been brought back to God. The men reboarded the ship, and the journey to De Souza continued. Francis' victory was greater, although he did not realize it at the moment, in winning back the individual soul than in securing what he sought from the Viceroy. He discoursed at length before De Souza on the state of the missions in the south, at Comorin, in Travancore, and other places. He demanded more protection for his converts, and insisted upon immediate redress of the wrong done on the island of Manar. Martin de Souza nodded vigorously.

"Governor de Souza was terribly upset," Francis wrote after the interview, "when I put before him the massacre of the Manarese. He issued orders that a fleet be prepared, and sent to seize the ruler of Jafnapatam and have him executed. Thereupon I had to step in and modify this righteous anger."

Francis' aim was that the offender be punished and superseded. He had no wish that the ruler, or anyone, be put to death. "I have no doubt," he told the Governor, "that the prayers of his victims will win for this evil ruler the favor to admit his evil act, and make atonement for his terrible offense."

Alas for the missionary in any country whose zeal and indignation runs a course counter to the interests of the local political figures! The Viceroy's expressed indignation was mostly a matter of words. De Souza understood, seemingly better than the priest, the play and counterplay of the political currents flowing between the Portuguese colonial officials and the cumbersome system of native princes and rajahs, the latter determined to barter and bicker with the Europeans but with no intent of suffering outside

interference if it could be helped. The Viceroy offered, at first, to have Francis accompany the "punitive expedition" and supervise the dethronement and punishment of the offending ruler of Jafnapatam.

Francis, however, as far as one can determine from the records of this period (which biographers have found conflicting in details), seems to have preferred to hurry back to Cochin. His friend, the Vicar-General of Goa, Michael Vaz, was about to sail for Lisbon. The two men had a lengthy conference upon the general and particular needs of the missions. These, as well as certain letters Francis had written while awaiting Vaz's sailing, would be laid before the King.

There is no mincing of words in the letters of this period, sent by the missionary back to the monarch through whose original action he had gone to the Orient. King John, the letters assume, is a man of God-fearing instincts, and much interested in the welfare of his subjects' souls. He is, moreover, one above, in position and wishes, the petty personal enrichments which have befouled the activities of his colonial officials. What this good King should do, therefore, is to appoint, in the first place, a Minister of the Missions, one who would come to India with more authority than even the Governor, at least in matters touching the welfare, spiritual and temporal, of the native Christians. Actually, one can well question the regime of Martin de Souza. A well-meaning man, but sufficient has been seen in the past three years to make one wonder whether he is of strong enough character to properly control the destiny of all the subjects, European and native, of King John.

Let the King of Portugal remember his responsibility before God. "Almighty God, Sire, will exact from your Majesty an account of the salvation of the numerous peoples who would embrace Christianity, if only they were allowed the opportunity to do so. The official of whom I have spoken should be sent to India, where his particular task will be to care for the salvation of those who are presently being lost. If you are anxious to take care of God's cause, if you possess consideration for the welfare of those living here in India, most particularly the souls won from paganism,

and if you would perform a personal service for me (and I've never asked you for any other), then you will appoint Michael Vaz as that Minister of which I have spoken already. The Bishop of Goa is a churchman of great holiness, but his age and sickness prevent him from dealing properly with the affairs of the missions here. Don Michael, on the other hand, has never failed to manifest great courage in opposing those who would attack our Christians."

The letter, reflecting its writer, is direct, forthright, and strong in priestly concern for souls. Its bold phrases are so many sparks thrown off from the burning purpose within the soul of Xavier. He had this burning zeal himself. He looked for it in others.

Nor would he be content to receive back a letter of compromise. It will *not* be enough (Francis tells the King) to send threats against the Portuguese officials, warning them to assist the efforts of Francis and the other priests. Francis knows well with what little respect such letters have been received in the past. This is the time for action. The Minister of Missions, with the authority already outlined, must be appointed, or we are wasting our time in both Lisbon and Goa. Moreover, Michael Vaz is the man most fitted, by nature and calling, for that position.

It is not difficult to imagine with what strength of hand and soul Francis sealed this letter to John, one of the world's leading monarchs of the time. "I am certain, your Majesty," he had concluded, "that I will die in the East. You and I shall never meet again in this life. But I pray most earnestly to God that we shall meet in the next life, and hence I pray that your Majesty will have the grace to always think and act as you will wish to have acted when you meet the hour of your death."

As the event turned out, the monarch welcomed the priest's bold letter. He considered Francis a saint, and initiated the steps leading to the recall of De Souza and the appointment of another viceroy. De Souza, as has been indicated earlier in this narrative, was not loath to leave India. With respect to Francis' requests concerning Michael Vaz, the monarch took action although not in quite the manner Xavier had desired. Near the end of 1546 Vaz returned as head of the Holy Office. Lisbon decided that a branch of the Inquisition might be useful in India. Francis himself

was in favor of such an office, not for the needs of his missions as indicated in his letter to the King, but for dealing with the baptized Jews and Moors coming to India in the belief they would be free from any supervision in the colony.

As for the punitive expedition against Jafnapatam and Ceylon, the much-promised retribution never materialized.

A Portuguese ship, sailing from Pegu, was stranded on the sands of Jafnapatam, and the King grabbed the cargo of spices, peppers, pearls, and gold. The ruler had not as yet been ousted. "Jafnapatam has not been seized," Francis wrote, with traces of bitterness, to Mansilhas, "and the ousted brother, who promised to make the land Christian when he was given the throne, has had no assistance in regaining it." Francis had been in India long enough to understand that the predatory ruler of Jafnapatam would hardly be opposed now by the Portuguese because of the treasure the wrecked ship placed in his hands. Diplomacy would go to work, devious approaches whereby the Portuguese would seek to regain their lost cargo. They would not offend the Rajah at this time.

His biographers are agreed that at this period, hurt by evil men's callousness toward his converts and by Portuguese indifference to the sacred importance of his work, Francis knew a desolation perhaps unequaled before or afterward in his missionary years. He was most weary himself but, while fatigue may have heightened his sense of exasperation, it was very secondary to the hurt he felt at seeing the perfidy of fellow Europeans. The martyrdom of Manar gave him spiritual strength. Some of that strength showed in the vigorous letters flowing from his pen at this time.

In writing to Simon Rodriguez, Francis did not withhold his opinion of the colonists in India. He begged Simon to dissuade his friends from accepting any government post or office in the East.

"Otherwise it probably will well be said of them as can now be said of the other Portuguese officials: 'Let their names be erased from the book of the living, and let not their names be written with those of the just.' No matter how you esteem your friends, you should save them from such danger. They cannot, of course,

be as confirmed in grace as were the Apostles, and so you should not hope they would conduct themselves as they ought in this land where everyone is bent upon plunder. Meantime, do what you can to see that Michael Vaz is permitted to return to India where he is so needed. He has had some twelve years of experience here, and he is as much loved by the good as he is feared by the evil-doers."

If Francis, in such sentences, reveals himself a man of direct address, there is further evidence in another celebrated letter—written to the Queen of Portugal. In it the missionary had some pertinent things to say to the Queen about the "Slipper Money," some 400 crowns sent yearly from the pearl fisheries as a tribute to her Majesty. Francis begged that the money be not used for personal adornment of a distant monarch when so much good could be done with the money at its point of origin.

"I beg your gracious Majesty to reflect," Francis said, "what better purposes could be served if the 'Slipper Money' were turned back to the support of our catechists here. Indeed, the Queen of Portugal could certainly have no better shoes or slippers, to climb with to heaven, than the Christian children of the Piscarian Coast."

One can but hazard a guess, reflecting upon the letters their Majesties of Portugal were wont to receive from their spiritual emissary in India, as to how much must have been the eager curiosity the monarchs experienced whenever they learned that "new letters have arrived from India."

The tears of a strong man are difficult to see. We are told that Francis wept upon learning that the punitive expedition to Jafnapatam had been canceled. As for himself, his interest had not been in the punishment taken against the murderous ruler of the area but rather an expedition which should serve as a warning to all native princes and rulers, concerned with molesting his converts. "So be it now," Francis told his followers upon learning of the ruler's present security, "but the hand of the Lord is not shortened. The day will yet come, and men will see it, when this princeling will perish, and miserably, too, at the hands of the Portuguese." History records that the prediction came true.

It was now, when his troubles weighed him down, that Francis made his pilgrimage to the traditional site of the tomb of St. Thomas at Meliapur. There, he felt, he would find spiritual refreshment, new courage for the many years of heartbreaking work stretching ahead for him in India and the East. The tomb was north of Negapatam, on the east coast of India, and during the seven days at sea Francis fasted and prayed. Inward strength was his need and he knew he would find it at the tomb of the Apostle. No matter that the town of Meliapur was full of Nestorians, the heresy brought to East India from Mesopotamia and Persia. In the *Town of the Peacock* (the meaning of the town's name), he would find solace and courage. Tradition had it that, when St. Thomas was martyred, he was "in a glade outside his hut, praying. Walking about were the peacocks of the area, mute witnesses to the death of one of the Twelve." On a hill, six miles from the town's center was the little church, said to have been erected on the very spot where the Apostle shed his blood.

Four months were spent, at the beginning of 1545, by Francis at Meliapur. He was the welcome house guest of the aged Vicar, Gaspard Coelho, a priest who struggled many years with the evil ways of Meliapur, frequently described as a "small Goa" in its indifference to religion and its open vices.

Despite the long hours spent in prayer, especially through the hours of the night, Francis achieved much in the region during his stay. The procedure of inviting all to hear him was again utilized. Frequently Francis invited himself into the homes of curious pagans or, more frequently, into the dwellings of fallen-away Catholics. Marriages were rectified. Sinners were brought back to the sacraments. The dissolute Portuguese experienced a revival of faith and morals. The saying went abroad, as such will in eastern countries, that whoever did not hearken to the holy Father Francis would die as an enemy of God. Instances were cited to prove this.

In any event, Francis' labors were so satisfying, to both himself and the citizens, that he could remark upon his departure, "I can say there is no more Christian town in the Indies than Meliapur, and one day it will be a great and prosperous city."

At the beginning of May, Francis wrote to Fathers Camerino and

Borba at Goa, describing his stay in Meliapur. He told these priests how, at the shrine of St. Thomas, he sought guidance for his immediate future. In his prayer his resolve to go to Malacca was confirmed, and already he had been drawing up in Malayan the articles of faith, prayers, and a form of general confession. His letter contained instructions: the Fathers, then spending the winter months at Mozambique, should go with certain others to Ceylon.

His own commission was to *all* of Portugal's eastern territories. Beyond India the land of Malacca called to him, and beyond, too, lay the Moluccas, the Spice Islands, and other areas needing his preaching tongue and his baptizing arm. There was an inward compulsion which summoned him eastward. "If I find no Portuguese ships to take me eastward this year to Malacca, I'll even go on a Moorish or pagan ship. Or, forsooth, on a native catamaran. But go I shall!"

No hesitation remained in Xavier as to the direct wish of God in his regard. He had sought and found his directive in prayer.

"With his customary favor, God has deigned to be mindful of me. I have sensed and realized, with inner consolation, that it is the Divine Will itself that I go now to Malacca. I'm so convinced and resolved to do what God has revealed to my soul that, were I to fail to carry this out, I would think I were thwarting the will of God. And that He would not extend forgiveness to me in this life nor indeed in the next."

Francis was happy in the knowledge that three priests were on their way to India from Portugal. These did not arrive until the saint was en route to Malacca. One was Anthony Criminale, whom Francis might well have met in Parma when journeying to Lisbon. This Jesuit was a man of the sort Francis desired most for the mission. When, in March, 1544, Simon Rodriguez summoned Criminale and told him to prepare to start for the Far East within twenty-four hours, the young priest laughed: "Italy, or the Indies, Turkey or any place! I'm prepared to go there or stay here. The only thing I seek is to labor for the love and the cause of God."

Such high-spirited missionaries were, Francis knew by experience,

invaluable and essential to the mission areas. His practical sense, on the other hand, told him that one must not always expect the high-perfect type of missionary to be available. "Do send strong missionaries out here," he wrote to his fellow Jesuits in Rome. "But if you don't find men youthful and strong ready at hand, send whomsoever you can spare. In Goa and Cochin and elsewhere there is much work for all. There are plenty of Portuguese families in those cities and, indeed, those creature comforts which might be needed by missionaries of delicate health."

About to leave for Malacca, Francis could take satisfaction, were he of such disposition, in looking back upon what his few years' stay in India had accomplished.

More than thirty thousand converts had entered the Church by his direct or indirect action. Through the length of the pearl fisheries some twenty thousand Christians, formerly baptized but since fallen away, had received instruction leading to resumption of Catholic life. His present directions were aimed at the conversion of Ceylon, that great island to be worked by his assistant priests. There was the record, known well to Xavier but only in part to others, of miracles performed, signifying the approval of his Leader, Christ, upon his efforts. Steps had been initiated by Francis himself in order to win the Portuguese, from the royal court in Lisbon to the Goanese government offices, to a more humane and Christian treatment of the natives within the colonial empire.

The way was open, accordingly, to move away from the mainland of India, eastward to Malacca and the Moluccas. In his absence, the catechisms Francis had put together, in Tamil and other dialects, would work for him. So, too, would the native catechists he had trained in Travancore and elsewhere. His preaching journeys, from Goa and down through coast settlements, had done much to weaken the hard-bound caste-system ideas. Men knew more fully that in God's eyes there was little difference between Brahmin and Pariah.

Rehearsing some of the names of the areas in which Francis worked evokes the picture of the gaunt, white-cassocked figure, crucifix in hand, restlessly moving from district to district in quest

of souls. Goa, Tuticorin, Calicut, Manapar, Cochin, Alendale, Comorin, Punical, Meliapur, Negapatam, and other areas. The sower ranged far and wide in the casting of the seed.

Work, work, and more work — through the hours of the day and until the night shall come wherein no man may work more. Such seems to have been Francis' motto. He summed up this welcome of opportunities to labor in a sentence found in one of the Mansilhas series of letters of instruction: "When all is said and done, you should be grateful to God (and I don't doubt you are) because He has put you in circumstances wherein you cannot be idle even if you should wish to be. The most palatable of all the sauces of toil, however great the work be, is to remember that everything happening to you is obviously part of your calling to work for God!"

Francis, about to leave the mainland, writes — in April, 1545 — to Mansilhas, now a priest, about the work to be done.

Go to all the towns and villages. Preach in them and baptize. Most important, be sure to instruct the children in their catechism. Keep track, too, of your expenses, and I will adjust your expenditures upon my return. Watch carefully, moreover, the way in which the native clergy conduct themselves, for we must ever treat them with tender solicitude and protect them when they need protection and strength.

A certain lay coadjutor is to be expelled from the Society, for the good of the man and the Society itself, and Mansilhas will take care of this.

All is taken care of. Francis is ready to depart for further scenes of his labors. A Portuguese ship, sailing for Malacca, is ready to take him and John d'Eiro, formerly a soldier and then a merchant, a young man who distributed his money to the poor and accompanied Francis to Malacca as a catechist and helper.

The people of Meliapur escorted their missionary priest-friend to the dock at sailing time. They begged his blessing and besought his return to them when circumstances would permit. Blessing them, Francis gazed about the harbor. Many ships and sailing craft lay at anchor. The city exported across the waters many

fine cotton goods which were sought by merchants in Hindustan and in Lisbon itself.

Thereupon Francis boarded the trader. Malacca was in the offing. So, too, were the Celebes mission lands. As he had written to Mansilhas: one must *go to all the towns and villages*.

[Chapter 14]

MALACCA AND THE ISLANDS OF SPICE

By the end of September, 1545, the trading ship had crossed the almost two thousand miles of dangerous seas and landed at Malacca.

The city stood near the lower end of the Malay Peninsula, the most southerly point of Asia, some miles above the modern Singapore. In the ancient town Francis was to work during his stay of more than three months. His efforts, as usual, were twofold: the reclamation of dissolute Portuguese and the instruction and conversion of the Malayan native. At one time the hearing of confessions so occupied him that for three days he took no time out for food.

At the time Malacca was not secondary to Singapore. Ranked as leading center of Eastern trading, it stood upon its promontory as the "key" or door to the East. Money flowed through its markets in such quantities that the city was nicknamed the *Golden Chersonese*. Money brought a constant flow of transients, merchants, and sailing people, and the melting-pot atmosphere of the city overhung much looseness of life and Oriental viciousness. With the experience gained in Goa, Francis was prepared to cope with the task confronting a missionary in the hot, narrow streets.

The Portuguese had seized Malacca in 1511 from its ruling Moslem sultan. To its docks thereafter came the fleets from China, Japan, Java, Bantu, the islands of the Indian archipelago, and Hindustan. The peninsula was not far from the Equator but

Francis found the climate more kind than that of India: a type of continuing springtime without extremes in weather.

The combined force of Francis' open invitation to all to pause and listen, and the example of his own daily life, began to make an impression upon a people almost surfeited with coarseness of morals and lack of faith.

During the night he took a few hours' sleep within his little hut resting his weary head upon a black stone. "Unless you do penance, you shall all perish." There was need, great need for the preaching of penance to this city which had almost forgotten the meaning of the word. Christians, first, must recapture the blessedness of a disciplined life. The Malays and Moslems must see the attractiveness of Christian virtues. Xavier has recorded that nowhere did he work harder, nor indeed with so little seeming results.

All things to all men —

"Xavier offered himself," one reads in the *Monumenta*, "to all as a close friend, and that by the gentleness of his speech with all. Frequently he joined with the men in their recreations and games, manifesting great concern in their play." One need hardly pause to recall that "play" in such areas was largely a matter of gambling. "When, in deference to him, the men paused, Francis kindly urged them to go on, pointing out that they were, for instance, soldiers and were not expected to lead the life of monks."

As in towns of India, Francis knew the value of artlessly inviting himself into the homes of others. "Might I come and take dinner with you?" The request was frequent, and most men, startled and pleased, hastened to extend the invitation.

"He made it," the report continues, "a custom to invite himself for a meal, now with one, now with another. And he entered their homes with much friendliness. He was wont to express approval of the food served, the serving, and then, requesting to speak to the cook, would graciously congratulate her. . . . His way in every group was so casual that with military men he seemed one of the military, and with tradesmen seemed a merchant. Everyone, not only the Portuguese but also their slaves and workers, were wholly devoted to the Father."

The more one studies, at a lamentable distance, the manner of

life and social dealing marking Xavier's life, the more the impression grows that he "had a way with him." The accounts in every area are the same. They portray a man of elusive but powerful personal charm, a man who was at home with men in every condition of life. The many scandals he rectified, the abuses abolished, and the conversions wrought are matters of record.

Notable at Malacca was the experience leading to the conversion of a Jewish rabbi. Many Portuguese settlements had a small Jewish community. The rabbi in Malacca made sport of Francis' bell ringing, his "democratic" mingling with divers and soldiers and dock workers. What other attitude could one take with a "holy man" who, for instance, persuaded a heavy gambler, about to destroy himself because of his losses, to continue inasmuch as his luck would change? That the luck did change and the suicide was averted, this was no tribute to holiness, was it? Let us say the law of averages manifesting itself.

"Leave him alone," Francis instructed some of his more militant followers, who wished to restrain forcibly the rabbi from his open insolence. "Let me handle this."

The "handling" followed the pattern in such cases. Francis went to his adversary's home, greeted him with friendliness, engaged him in discussion of learned matters. The priest's wit and personal charm had their usual effect. Antipathy changed to friendliness. Academic discussions yielded to religious debates. Francis was seeking one objective: the conversion of this soul. The end result delighted him, even while it produced dismay and wonder in the Jewish settlement in Malacca. The rabbi asked for and received Christian baptism.

Also brightening Francis' days in the peninsula was a letter received from Ignatius. One notes that it took over two years to travel from Rome to the Malayan district. Meanwhile, in December and with little time remaining in Malacca, Francis wrote to Father Paul Camerino. He speaks of his proposed stop at Amboina, for there were many Christians awaiting his services there. He directs that the recently arrived Fathers Criminale and Beira proceed at once to Comorin to continue the work Francis had so successfully initiated throughout the fisheries.

More can be done there by these Fathers than at Goa. If, moreover, Mansilhas is in Goa at present, let them take him along.

As for himself, what else but to prepare for traveling farther eastward? It would be a good way to initiate the new year about to commence.

Even as Paul of Tarsus, Francis was one to consider trade winds, to estimate the centers of population, the central isles of a large group of islands, centers from which his efforts might radiate outward. His view was the *large* one, consonant with his repeated cry, *More, O Lord, give me more souls!* About the great island of Celebes lay many islands, fertile centers of religious growth could he but reach them.

In Cochin, Francis had met one Anthony de Paiva, a Portuguese trader en route to Goa, where he would place four Malayan young men, destined for the seminary. The enthusiastic De Paiva kindled the enthusiasm of the priest with his account of the many islands eastward. Some were under Moslem domination but the natives were ready for Christianity. Paiva himself had baptized some few, but a man of the stamp of Xavier was needed. Baptism made the natives both Christians and subjects of the Portuguese government, but much instruction and administration of the sacraments called for a zealous missionary. Francis listened, fascinated with the recital, a challenge, and, as he understood it, a providential summons.

The Islands of Spice had been opened to the European in the last decade of the preceding century. In the *Journal of the First Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, is found the opening salute:

"In the Name of God, Amen! King Dom Manuel, the first holding that name in Portugal, sent forth in the year 1497 four vessels on an expedition of discovery and to seek for spices."

Before the worldly-wise expeditions of the Portuguese, the rich trade in spices had been enjoyed by Arab and Venetian merchants and traders. The voyages of the great discoverer changed the picture and the thoughts of far-western Europe. Now men sitting at their counting tables in Lisbon offices thought of the distant waters, of sea lanes plowed by Portuguese vessels as well as by the wandering Chinese junks, of the half-naked bodies of Orientals diving for coins and pearls in the Eastern isles, of sandalwood,

peppers, cloves, and cheap merchandise. With that peculiar facility marking the rationalizing of so many Westerners of the era, there was the pious assurance, self-given and fostered, that above all there would be opportunity to bring Christianity to the benighted heathens of the Indies.

Rolls of Oriental silks and bales of sugar cane, however, were not the merchandise sought by Francis Xavier. His objective was the salvation of as many souls as he could reach.

Much of the garnering of souls was done in the confessional. Francis, writing to the brethren in Portugal, tells of the great crowds of penitents. Frequently many were disappointed in not being able to confess. The crowds were too large; those unable to reach the priest went away, hoping to arrange a return in order to receive the sacrament.

In a few half hours snatched from the overbusy day, Francis worked further on translation of basic prayers into Malayan. And on simple explanations of the *Creed*, the Commandments, and chief points of Christian doctrine. "It is a bothersome thing, though," he writes with weariness, "not to be familiar with the tongue spoken here." Nevertheless Francis understood, better than anyone else, the importance of preparing a course of instructions. His aim was a year's course, an outline to be left in most cases with the catechists who would continue the work once the missionary passed on to other regions.

Malacca was not to be one of Francis' more successful mission stations. Many received the sacraments and there was much reform of morals, but these achievements were relative ones. Proportionately to the size of the city's population, his success was to Francis' shrewd judgment a limited one. It did not share the degree of attainment his work had known in Goa.

The priest's thoughts were increasingly upon the islands farther eastward. Time enough later to return to India and Goa. Word reached Malacca that one John de Castro had come to Goa to supersede Martin de Souza as governor. Coming to India with him were the three priests sent by Ignatius. Francis' directions for the new arrivals have been seen in the letter cited earlier.

News from Europe was always more than welcome. Peter Faber sent to his onetime roommate and Jesuit companion of the earliest days an account of his work in Cologne and Louvain. From Ignatius in Rome came enthusiastic reports of the Society's success in the Coimbra college. And of the return to the aegis of Loyola, as a member of the Society, of Jerome Nadal. Francis rejoiced to know the increased membership in the company of Ignatius promised more men for the mission fields.

"By the heart of Jesus Christ," he wrote vigorously to Rodriguez as 1545 ended, "I beg of you to furnish us here with as many members of the Society as can be spared!"

Knowing the dangers, physical and moral, facing missionaries in the Orient, Francis adds a word of caution: Let those who are sent be men well grounded in learning, in the arts of preaching, and *above all else* in personal holiness. The ways of evil and sensuality are always surrounding the lone missionary in an Eastern atmosphere where seductive vapors move in the air above one's head.

In the same month, writing to Camerino, Francis explains that his original intent to visit Macassar in Celebes had changed. A priest named Viegas had already reached Macassar, with attendant catechists, and good work was being done for the natives. Francis, therefore, would not delay, but would go to Amboina where his presence was needed much more. John d'Eiro would accompany him on the trading vessel.

There is even today a ring of romance in the phrase "the isles of spice." The area has caught the imagination of Westerners from the days of Da Gama's first expeditions down to the twentieth century's travelers to the area of New Guinea. To these islands, to the Moluccas, Francis Xavier would travel in quest of souls. He sailed, for the second journey of two thousand miles within a six months' period, leaving the Malay Peninsula on New Year's Day, 1546. It was a journey through sea lanes close to the Equator. Sailing eastward, the vessel was north of the spreading islands of Java and Bali. Northward, as progress continued, lay Borneo, one of the largest of the islands in the seas off southeastern Asia. East of Borneo, Celebes rose from the ocean waters. Francis meditated

upon the vastness of the far-flung watery miles upon miles, that immensity of the Pacific Ocean which has never failed to impress both Eastern and Western travelers alike.

"What can *one* man do in such vast areas?"

The question was recurrent in Francis' mind. Out of sight lay numberless islands, large and small. Upon those isles, most of them of volcanic origin, lived human beings, creatures of God whose destiny was the same as that of all men. Naked to the equatorial sun, many of these island natives had an indigenous culture and way of life, a code of simple morals, and frequently an unlettered intuition of the law of the Creator greater than some peoples in reputedly "civilized" nations.

The ship plowed its eastward course, intermittently accompanied by schools of porpoise and circling gulls. East of Celebes and lying as a north-and-south pendant of emeralds within the blue Pacific waters were the Moluccas. The lowest of this chain of islands pointed southward to the large island of Amboina, lying west of New Guinea. This was the pepper and clove island area of the world, a succession of reef-bound and coral sand pin points of land washed by the encircling seas. The fleets of Spain and Portugal, carrying empire and conquest to these distant waters, enabled both nations to establish their rule in the respective archipelagoes of the Philippines and the Moluccas.

The pagan and idolatrous sailors, manning the ship under Portuguese masters, found Francis an object of curiosity. Slowly, but with gentle persistence, he won their confidence. When the ship was buffeted by storms and punishing mast-high waves, the priest moved across deck amid the rain-lashed, panting crew. "Look upward," he charged them, "look beyond the storm! Above is the peace of God, who rules all the waters. He will take us through these perils if we have but faith in His power."

"Perhaps God wished to try us" (Francis wrote the Rome brethren). The pilot, near the scheduled end of the long voyage to Amboina was worried about his navigation.

"We've overshot our mark," he said dolefully. "I think we've been driven far beyond the landing point in Amboina."

Francis laid a reassuring hand upon the man's arm. "No, do not

think so. You've done well. We are already on the outskirts of the gulf. Tomorrow morning, if you hold your course, we will sight the shore of the island at daybreak."

The captain and the pilot, dubious, exchanged quick skeptical glances. Deference to the priest made them withhold comment.

Francis smiled and swept the forward horizon with a wave of one arm. "You'll see," he said confidentially, "tomorrow at dawn, the land."

At daybreak, the sandy shores of the great island appeared through the morning mist. Francis, in the bow of the vessel, peered through the lifting misty haze. He was arrived now at another major objective. Beyond the sparkling wave-washed sandy beaches lifted the tree-thick hills and the almost impassable jungles covering most of Amboina's interior. Head-hunters were reputed to dwell, alone and unmolested, in the interior. Amboina was typical of the great majority of the spice islands. Portuguese settlements lay along the coast, a relatively small but sufficiently armed group of controlling foreigners surrounded by natives sprung of Malayan or kindred racial stocks. Most natives of Amboina were of low Papuan strain. These he must reach, beating down Mohammedan errors in the minds of coastal natives and wrestling against the devil worship infecting the people dwelling within the insect-laden mountainous recesses.

If it was not one thing, it was another. Xavier was accustomed to meet difficulties of varied types, and beat them down, pushing forward in time and geographical location in pursuit of souls.

Borneo and Sumatra had the dubious distinction of possessing perhaps the largest population of head-hunters. In Ceram one encountered the cannibalism which bespoke the primitive character of the native and was enough, even when allowance is made for understandable exaggerations in relaying stories of cannibals, to shock the Europeans at distant dinner tables. Merchants of western Europe were willing to take the spices of the islands for pitifully small payment but rebelled at further contact with certain native people whose hill-country menu was not averse to occasional servings of human flesh.

Francis learned by personal experience that the people of

Amboina's coast towns understood Malayan, but preferred their own dialects for ordinary speech. In any event, he was now able to make use of the prayers and instructions which he had put together laboriously in the Malayan tongue before setting sail for the Spice Islands. In visiting the smaller towns, most of which were mere hamlets with local tribal government and "houses" of bamboo and palm fronds, he added loud singing to his customary bell-ringing invitations. To natives, black skinned and wary, crouching within their steaming huts and watching the suspicious stranger, the invitation of the bell was not enough to win trust. Francis added the warmth of the human voice lifting in song. Not so much song but a pleasant summoning chant. "Come, come, come and see," he sang, beating the time of slowly paced measures with his swinging bell. "Come and hear, for I have wondrous things to tell, wondrous words to say. Come, come, and hear!"

They came, these simple people whose little lives were happy withal in a round of the collecting of cloves and the carrying of spices to the ships of foreign merchants who visited their shores. To them Francis spoke in kindly wise. First, where are your sick, your dying? Then one shows complete concern for the children. In the Spice Islands the love of parent for child is basically no different nor less from that found anywhere in the world. The children drew their parents, and Francis drew both old and young alike within the circle of the knowledge of God.

A welcome opportunity came to him in the arrival of a flotilla of Spanish ships. The coming of his countrymen was a bright day for the wandering Xavier. That the Spanish were not of very good character did not bother Francis, for he knew he would win them to a remembrance of their Catholic duties. The fierce storms of the northeast seas had driven the Spaniards to seek refuge in Amboina. Francis, mingling with the sailors, offering himself as their chaplain during the ships' sojourn in Amboina, learned that perhaps their storm experience was an act of God. The captains of the ships had set sail southward for the purpose of raiding certain of the Spice Islands and taking by seizure certain cargoes which they had no intention of paying for.

"The hand of the good God," Francis preached to the Spaniards,

"was laid upon your voyaging. It was an evil purpose that drew you to these southern waters. God knew your hearts and your evil intent. That may very well be the reason that your trip was threatened, that on the deep ocean you were in peril of your lives. Now God has given you the opportunity to reach this haven, and here you can confess your sins to God. Here you can receive our Lord in Holy Communion. And here you can amend your purpose, for such a grace and favor from heaven may not be granted should there be a next time of danger."

Thanks to Francis' friendship with the Portuguese in the Amboina coast settlement, the Spaniards were not molested. The Portuguese, prompted by the missionary's exhortations, his emphasis that *now* is an opportunity for a gesture of brotherly love, rose to the occasion. They presented the Spanish ship officers with gifts of provisions and with quantities of choice spices to take from Amboina as a parting gift as they sailed away.

While arranging this quite infrequent fraternal expression of charity, Francis was approached by an embarrassed messenger from a wealthy merchant, named John de Araujo. The merchant had promised to give help to Xavier, the priest in turn helping the visiting sailors and using some of the merchant's gifts to relieve the needs of the sick and poor of the dock areas.

"Father Francis," panted the messenger, "I am covered with confusion, with sorrow. I have news which to your gracious ears will come with heavy force. My master, Don John, says he will not send you any more wine for the sick. He says he has given you enough and begs you to understand that a man cannot deprive himself beyond a certain point. There will be no more wine sent to you here."

Francis studied the troubled face of the young native as the flustered young man scanned the priest's features for forgiveness. The missionary's face relaxed into lines of smiling reassurance.

"Go back to your master," Francis said gently. "Tell him I am more than grateful for the help he has given us until now. It was, indeed, his Christian duty, and a gracious expression on the part of a Portuguese to others of a different race. But tell him also that he is wrong if he wishes to keep the wine for himself. Say

that Father Francis tells him he will not, after all, drink the wine for a much longer time, for God will take John de Araujo sooner than Don John suspects."

The merchant, upon receiving the message, took no offense. His admiration for Xavier was great. Because of this he had helped Francis help the poor, and because of this he had sent the wine. Now, receiving Francis' words, he sent further wine. Not many months afterward, as the priest had predicted, he died, and his wealth was left to the poor of the district.

Francis continued his round of preaching, teaching, baptizing, and administration of the sacraments. During this period the letter was written which contains, in brief scope, a self-revelation treasured at the time by the European Jesuits and by Francis' admirers ever since.

"Keep sending, my brothers, your letters to me," comes the cry from his frequently lonely heart, "for these are my treasure, and I cut from them your signatures and these I carry above my heart always."

In thoughtful consideration of this appeal to his spiritual brothers, in a far-distant but never forgotten Europe, the reader catches the glimpse of an exile's response to a word from those left behind. To the pagans of islands in the southwestern Pacific waters was given no knowledge of the deeply cultured background of this stranger in their midst. To them the tall, emaciated figure in the threadbare robe was a "holy man" from a distant land. In his bearded face was kindness, indeed, and, if one cared to listen to him, a message of simple belief in the European's God. They had no realization that in their midst was a man of exquisite family breeding, a student whose keen intelligence carried him in youth to the professor's chair at the University of Paris, a "holy man" whose goodness so won the admiration of the King of Portugal that the priest was almost prevented from leaving Lisbon. To the pagans Francis revealed nothing of his sorrow at the necessary separation from Ignatius and Faber, Rodriguez and Broet.

I cut from them your signatures and these I carry above my heart always. The only other thing Francis carried, suspended about his neck at all times, was the copy of his vows, those pledges

taken when he knelt at the feet of the Bishop of Goa and sent in his own handwriting to Ignatius in Rome.

For him, however, there was little time to reminisce or to meditate upon the European scene. His work was pressing. His ardor heightened with each passing day. Good work had been done for the Faith in Amboina. But there were other islands. To them he must go; to them he does go. From June of 1546 until April of 1547 he is on a circuit embracing the North Moluccas, Tidore, Ternate, Moretai, Riao, and as many of the isles as ship, junk, raft, or sailing skiff could reach. Many of the natives were in the lowest scale of civilization. Many were lost in low forms of idolatry, many in peculiarly Oriental aberrations and vices, the extent of which has never been completely told. Never completely told, moreover, is the story of the difficulties and hardships marking the priest's lone progress through the islands of the Moluccas during this ten months' journeying. Francis' nostrils fought against volcanic dust, even while his tongue and spiritual energy braced themselves against the devil-worshipping, deplorable condition of thousands of Eastern native souls. For them he endured, but left scant record of that endurance. Like Paul of early Christianity, he could recount shipwreck on three separate occasions. Personal attack by Moslems threatened his life on numerous occasions. In the thick insect-infested jungle bush Francis hid, without sustenance for three days and nights at one time, in order to save his life.

One might expect certain sharp strictures to be drawn on the Islands of Spice after such obstacles and dangers. Such criticisms might be found, in fact have been found, from the pens of other European visitors to these areas. But not from Xavier. His success was sufficient to satisfy his zeal.

"Actually I cannot recall," he writes, "that I have ever been more happy anywhere else. Nor when my inward joy was more continuous. . . . These islands should, more properly, be called not *islas de Moro*. Rather let them be called *islas de esperar en Dios* — for truly they are isles of hope in God."

It is not surprising that in all subsequent years Christian missionaries have treasured the letters of Francis Xavier. They reveal in welcome frankness one who was a man, as well as a man of

God. Joyous, tired, forthright in necessary criticism, ardent in zeal, touchingly sensitive in friendship — the writer of the letters stands in self-revelation as appealing in his friendly and dedicated person as he appeared to those for whom he worked. It is understandable that Beira and Criminale and Camerino accepted his written directions with welcome, carried them through with neither question nor delay, and did not demur at what dangers might be implied.

As for dangers indicated, possible threats to Francis' own life, these were not debated by the other priests. Thus, with an understanding of his character and purpose, and with a renewal of prayers for their leader's safety, these missionaries read letters indicating Xavier's plans.

I shall bring with me on my next forward trip a tin chalice, rather than a silver one. It is safer among those strange natives on some of the islands.

Now I'm about to visit the Moro Islands. It will be interesting to see the primitive people, many of them labeled "ferocious." I cannot but be curious about the reports that they are not above eating prisoners of war nor even their aging relatives. The Christians of these islands have fallen almost completely away from their practice of religion; they're more barbarians than Christians. But I will win them back, please God. And assuming that the frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions do not lay me low. Meantime I must laugh at the good wishes of certain of my friends here: they try to give me oriental antidotes to the poisons they feel sure I will be fed by native tribesmen. My own faith lies rather in your precious prayers, and in the protection of our Lord.

Thus the letters run on. Written when Francis had a brief opportunity, they form a running commentary and travelogue of his incessant wandering.

A great "wandering," meantime, was forming in his mind while he traveled the Islands of Spice. His thoughts strayed with more and more frequency to the great areas lying to the north. To China and to Japan. That missionary journeys to such lands presented greater obstacles, greater aloneness in areas where no Christians at all were to be found, meant little or nothing to Francis. Had he not just spent three months in Moretai, where

he found (as he declared later) no human help? In these months he was "more alone with God" than ever before — and yet "I do believe these three months were the happiest in my life."

While traveling to the Moro Islands, with John d'Eiro, the celebrated "incident of the crucifix" is said to have occurred. While a storm raged about the ship, Francis lifted his crucifix in blessing against the storm. The waves subsided and the danger passed. The crucifix, however, slipped from the priest's hand and disappeared beneath the waves, to Francis' great sorrow.

What followed was related in the process of canonization. The following day, while walking along the shore, Francis and others saw a crab coming out of the waves and moving toward Xavier on the sands. In its claw was the lost crucifix, which the crab laid at the feet of the saint. To many in later years the story seems legendary. Others doubt it completely. In any event it is part of the written record. It at least suggests the position which Francis enjoyed in the minds of contemporaries, men and women who would not find anything unbelievable in such an incident. Even if a crab appeared with the crucifix (a devil's advocate might suggest), this would not necessarily postulate a miracle strictly so called. In any event, it might be noted, Xavier's canonization was not dependent in the eyes of the Church upon the incident of the thoughtful crab.

In the sterile and rocky Moro Islands Francis labored with a race of people who lived on little. Corn and wine were unknown to them. Their only meat was that of the wild boar, which these primitives killed with the same zest with which they leveled their spears against most strangers entering their midst.

Xavier won their trust, their friendship, and often their conversion. One mountain range was in almost continual volcanic eruption. "What is the meaning of such upheavals?" the Moros asked. Francis pointed to the smoking mountain cones. "This is a symbol," he told them, "a constant reminder provided by the one true God, of the fires of hell which await all men, no matter who they are or where they dwell, if they are not obedient to the law of God."

Francis was offering Mass one day, the feast of St. Michael the

Archangel, when an earthquake tremor shook the earth and nearly upset the crude altar. Francis, writing of the event later — and perhaps with a wry smile upon his lips — made the observation: “It may be that good St. Michael was seizing and hurling down into hell the demons in these islands who are opposing the works of God.”

Upon returning to Ternate, Francis visited Misericordia Hospital. This hospital, in poor condition prior to the priest’s earlier visit, became the beneficiary of Francis’ appeal to the Portuguese of the city. Ill-gotten gains and restitution of stolen monies, plus much “conscience money” whose origin only the owners knew, flowed in great quantities to the Misericordia. Francis had nominated it as a worthy recipient of whatever charity the repentant Christians wished to bestow. On this second visit he had the satisfaction of seeing the hospital growing, through repairs and new additions, into a splendid building. Eventually it was to become the richest and best hospital in the Indies.

Three months were spent now in further evangelizing and catechizing the people of Ternate. Twice each week Francis gave spiritual conferences to the women of Ternate, converts from Mohammedanism as well as Catholic wives of Portuguese merchants. To the local church he entrusted a handwritten explanation of Christian doctrine in Malayan tongue. This, after his return to India, was to be read aloud and slowly in the church every Sunday and feast day. Meanwhile certain chosen converts at the Misericordia were trained to walk through the streets each evening, ringing a hand bell to remind all to pray for the sinners and the souls in purgatory. Young men of promise were interviewed with a desire to assist them in their wish to become priests.

Thus the round of priestly duties and missionary journeyings continued. It is amazing to others, in retrospect, to envision the multiplicity of Francis’ activities. His gaunt figure was familiar in island after island of the Indies. His hair was thinning now and slowly turning white. The eyes, beneath the white hairline, still burned, however, with the inward fire, the restless questing which prodded the priest ever onward. Souls, and more souls. This was the unchanging objective, this the stimulus and the summons.

The time approached for Francis' return to India. There further plans would be formulated, especially with reference to China and Japan. There, moreover, letters from Europe would await him. He did not look for such letters in the Moluccas. Three years and nine months, according to Francis himself, were required for an answer to go to Rome from these islands. Rome to India: eight months. Then, eight months' wait for vessels to sail for the Moluccas. To the Moluccas and return an added twenty-one months. Thereafter the eight more months for the trip from India to Rome. This schedule, moreover, operated when conditions of travel were altogether favorable.

Francis left the Islands of Spice for the return trip to India in April of 1547. Behind him were new converts but many also who would not accept his preaching, especially among members of Moslem sects. Francis knew that it would be many a day and year before the faith would make much headway against the Mohammedan influences in the East.

"And yet," he wrote the previous May, "if only a dozen priest helpers would come here from Europe each year, it would not be long before the Moslem movements ended, and all in these islands would become Christians."

Behind this seeming optimism was something more than hopeful enthusiasm. Mohammedanism in the islands flourished from the upper social level downward. The peoples would, as in so many other departments of life, follow the lead of their rulers and masters. The masters, however, enjoyed the sensuality afforded by basic Moslem beliefs.

The young Sultan of Ternate offers an example. His predecessor in the ruler's chair was the Sultana Neachila, a convert to the faith who took the name Isabelle at baptism. She had been deposed and replaced, by the order of the Governor of Goa, by a young relative of evil thought and way of life. This Sultan was perfectly at home in the Portuguese language and loud in his protestation of loyalty to the King of Portugal. With abundant but fallacious rhetoric he attempted to persuade Francis that there was little or no difference between Mohammedanism and Christianity.

"Is it not true that we both worship the same God?"

"Why, then," Francis persisted, "will not your Highness accept the Christian baptism?"

Even before asking, the priest knew the Sultan's reason. He had no intention of giving up a harem of more than a hundred concubines, nor the four wives permitted him by the Koran. The monogamous ideal and practice of the Christian religion was almost unthinkable to a ruler whose sensuality was his predominant guidepost in life. Meantime, while the Sultan maintained his Moslem way of life, his subjects, or all but the most hardy, went along with their leader's example.

Some day, Francis told himself grimly as he prepared to return to India via Malacca, even these Moslems will sicken of their sexuality and their sordidness of life. In that day the opportunity will await the missionary to lead them into the pathway of Christian restraint and innocence of heart.

But that day still lay far ahead.

[Chapter 15]

INDIAN PROBLEMS AND A NEW ADVENTURE

The missionary's lot, in any clime or time, is not a happy one. Not, at least, in the sense that Providence wards off from the apostle all obstacles. Inwardly the missionary enjoys an untroubled basic joyousness, a resolute awareness that troubles, even those coming from least expected sources, provide welcome opportunity to "imitate in some sort his Lord and Master."

Among the "least expected sources" of Xavier's troubles was the misunderstanding, on the part of certain priest brethren, of his aims and his manner of achieving his purposes.

Mention has been made of Father Lancilotti's coming to India with Father Criminale. The latter was to become the first martyr of the Society in the East. Lancilotti, a consumptive, remains in the record as a well-meaning man but one extremely active in writing letters to Rome, letters complaining of Francis' methods and his frequent absences from Goa.

Lancilotti, and others who complained of these absences from the capital of India, were ready to attribute them to the "Basque restlessness" inherent in Francis' racial strain. The explanation was ready to hand, but too pat, too handy. Restless he was, with an impatience to achieve mission success in as many areas of the East as he could reach. History acknowledges that his success was enormous, heaven-favored, even though that success fell far below his projected plans and, at the end, left the vastness of China untouched.

Francis himself best understood why he did not settle down in

Goa. His decision was a matter of policy. The perennial corruption of the Portuguese and, which was worse, their indifference to reclamation baffled Francis and disappointed him. He would go elsewhere, to areas where petty government officials would not interfere with his priestly work, nor hinder it.

"I wish to take myself," Francis wrote, "where one finds no Moslems. Give to me the forthright pagans. And peoples who yearn to learn something of the nature of God. I am, you know, determined to seek out and find such people."

Francis came, by slow stages, back to India, arriving in Goa in 1548. While he was away from the Indian mainland, "determined to seek out and find such peoples," six priest missionaries and nine coadjutor Brothers had arrived at Goa from Portugal. Besides the Jesuits there came twelve Dominicans. Now the general mission picture was improving, although personal and domestic troubles would arise occasionally.

Among the new arrivals were men of the stamp of Juan Fernandes and Cosme de Torres. Later they would be, with Francis, founders of the mission to Japan. Learning was represented in the person of Antonio Gomes, outstanding scholar of Coimbra, master of arts, a doctor of Canon Law, and an able preacher. The zeal and enthusiasm of Gaspard Baertz (former master of arts at Louvain and soldier in the army of Charles V) prompted from Xavier the famous cry: "*Da mihi fortes Belgas!*" His appeal for "strong Belgians" was occasioned particularly by the Fleming's capacity for work.

Gomes' arrival was to be reckoned, later in retrospect, as "a mixed blessing." He would not have the success in Goa which marked his work in Lisbon. Nor was he one to understand, despite his scholastic degrees, that the worst role for a newcomer to assume is that of reformer. Taking over the rectorship of the college, once belonging to the bishop of Goa and hitherto managed by Lancilotti, Gomes set about "sweeping clean" the establishment. The result was unfortunate. His hard, authoritative ways turned the college upside down. Lancilotti, observing the procedure ruefully, reported that his successor seemed not well versed in the Society's customary manner in handling men. Members of the religious

community soon were as discontented as were the native students. Neither group favored the rector's assumption that he could, with effort and imagination, make the college "another Coimbra," with branches in Cochin, Bacaim, and other centers.

Xavier was to have his problems with men of the type of Gomes. Meantime, on the way back to Goa, and while sojourning in Malacca, an event occurred which would have impressive sequels.

The conversion of distant Japan arose on Francis' mental horizon and captured his imagination with a completeness not to be denied or set aside.

In Malacca, his former converts welcomed back with joyous acclaim their *Padre Santo*. His companions treated Francis with a respectful awe which both amused and exasperated him. It was about this time that his extraordinary vision or supernatural powers made him announce the death of Peter Faber. Francis, however, was most concerned at Malacca with what he learned from a young Japanese named Yajiro. The youth arrived in December at the Church of Our Lady of the Mount, coming to seek out Francis inasmuch as his mind was troubled about past misdeeds. If anyone could straighten him out, Yajiro said, it would be the holy priest. During the preceding April, Francis had met and chatted briefly with certain traveling Japanese merchants, and the experience had aroused his curiosity about the isles in the northern waters. Yajiro's arrival now served to whet an apostolic zeal for actual missionary effort in the Japanese empire.

The young man fascinated Francis. He had been, among other things in his short career, a murderer; it was partly due to his remorse because of this that he sought out the missionary.

"My native land," the young man explained, "the country of *Zipangu*, called the Land of the Rising Sun, has been known to the men of the West but for a few years. None of your Western men have entered my country as yet, but the way will be open for those of the stout heart."

The prospect thrilled Francis. He put unending questions to his informant. What were the Japanese people like? What religion was foremost in the Japanese islands? Would the rulers be opposed to the foreign priests? The questions ran on. The ardent Yajiro,

joyous in the happy opportunity of refashioning his troubled soul and also in finding an understanding listener in the priest, rattled on and on. The priest must come to Japan. Francis smiled.

"If all the people of Japan," he wrote, "are as desirous for instruction as Yajiro himself, then I believe they are the most inquiring folk in all the known world." Would such people welcome him into their midst? "I questioned Yajiro about this, as to whether the Japanese would accept Christianity. He said, not at first, but they would ply me with inquiries of all sorts. They would weigh my answers and determine how much knowledge I possessed. Most important, they would study me, to see if my way of living matched my teaching. If I succeeded in two things, speaking ably in reply to their questions and living without blame-worthy conduct, then, he tells me, a change comes after a half year. The ruler, the nobles, and all well-informed and discreet people will become Christians."

Writing further, Francis indicates how avidly his soul is turning to the prospect of wider fields of endeavor.

"All the Portuguese traders, coming from the land of Japan, tell me that in that nation I can achieve much indeed for God our Lord. More, as a matter of fact, than among the people of India, inasmuch as the Japanese are a people greatly prone to consider questions with their *reason*. Knowing what is in my heart, I'm sure that either I myself or some other member of our Society will make the trip to Japan within the next two years. Yet we know the journey is dangerous, a trip of extreme peril because the seas are stormy and the sea lanes crawling with Chinese pirates. Many a ship goes down. Hence, you must pray to God, dear Fathers and Brothers, for all who may attempt this trip."

Yajiro, happy to have whetted the holy Father's enthusiasm and desires, had a request to make. Would Father Francis baptize him? The Vicar-General of Malacca had not approved of the baptism and Francis believed the discreet procedure would be to wait.

"You must rather," he told the youth, "come back with me now, for I'm on my way to Goa. There you will study at the Santa Fe, and learn more of Portuguese and of Christianity. There will be

time then for baptism. We will travel separately as far as Cochin, for it is proper for you to make that step of the journey in company with your Portuguese friends. I'll meet with you ten days from now in Cochin, and then we'll go on to Goa."

It was agreed upon. Francis, his head crowded with plans for the future and for a revisitation of his earlier mission stations, sailed from Malacca after his five months' stay. As he watched the waters slide away from the sides of the advancing ship, Francis' thoughts were already possessing the future. He must revisit his dear converts of Comorin and of Travancore. The Jesuit priests in Goa, awaiting him, would have need of his advice, his directives in planning the future of the mission. His years, not many but very full, as missionary and papal nuncio, taught him much and the counsel he could give would prove helpful to the brethren. There remained another attempt, to be made sooner or later, of evangelizing Ceylon.

The journey was a difficult one. Although the priest was now more accustomed to sea travel and did not suffer as much as before from the wretched seasickness, he shared with the ship's crew their concern for the safety of the vessel. It nearly foundered in the Ceylon Strait. Cargo was jettisoned to lighten the ship. The sailors cursed and wept by turns, many of them convinced that their last moments had come. Never, they vowed, would they board a ship again — if they escaped this devil sea's assault.

"Be calm," Francis urged them. "Keep working, for God will see us through. Make your confessions now and trust in the Lord who rules the seas."

There was that in their passenger's voice which renewed the hope and confidence of the men. When he was not with them on deck, Francis was upon his knees in his cabin, invoking especially the intercession and protection of Peter Faber. When the ship was out of control, driving for a short time on the Ceylon sandbanks, Francis himself took the sounding line and plummet from the hands of the testing sailor.

"Great God of all," he cried aloud, permitting the sounding line to sink further beneath the heaving waves, "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, have mercy upon all of us!"

The ship's captain and crew stared at him, the tall and leaning figure like a creature from another world. Francis, with his eyes closed, face uplifted against the lashing spray, continued his prayers, his hands gripping the sounding line. Slowly, and with the encouraging shouts of amazed sailors lifting against the wind's whining, the ship came under control. The battered bow came around in full arc while the captain, joyous but determined, shouted orders to the men. The ship rolled, swung toward the open sea, and the crew knew the immediate danger was passed. The storm itself was beginning to abate. Eyes turned to the priest, now fallen to his knees upon the heaving deck and with his head bowed in grateful prayer.

"He's *done* it!" The shouts carried across the decks but Francis seemed oblivious to them. "You did it, Father Francis. You saved us!"

Later, as was his wont, Francis discounted his own part in such experiences. No credit would be accepted for himself. *Non nobis, Domine, sed nomini Tuo* —

Storms of wind and rain and troubled seas did not disturb Xavier but personal and human relationships did upon occasion. This was particularly true when he believed certain co-workers, sent from Europe, were not of the stature he deemed necessary for gathering the harvest of souls.

"The Lord knows, *pater carissime*," he writes to his beloved Ignatius from Cochin, "how I yearn to see you again in life, that I might inform you of many things needing your assistance and care. Out here I behold many of the Society and I realize we have great need for a doctor for our own souls.

"I beg of you by our Lord Jesus, oh best of fathers, to have in mind these your sons in India. Dispatch to them some man of outstanding virtue and holiness, indeed one whose vitality and alertness can move me myself from my own lethargy."

Commentators have noted, with understandable sympathy, such references appearing occasionally in Francis' letters, small phrases of self-revelation: his "lethargy," his hunger for communion, even if only spiritual, with his European brethren and above all with Ignatius. The references, one notes, are not many. Coming from

the pen of one whom the world has acknowledged as a saint, they provide welcome and most humane colors in the background of the over-all picture of his mighty missionary life.

These flashes of intimate self-revelation are as so many grace notes in the long series of letters sent by their brother in the Far East to the Jesuits in Rome.

"Whenever I start speaking of the Holy Company of Jesus," Francis declared, "I'm at a loss as to how to get away from such a joyous matter, or how to lay my pen aside. . . . I cannot think of any better manner of concluding than to tell all of you: if ever I should become unmindful of the Society of the name of Jesus, then let my right hand be given to oblivion."

His exquisite sense of values prompted a protestation of his debt of gratitude to the Society, one he felt wholly inadequate to repay. It is not difficult to imagine with what quiet satisfaction, and indeed admiration, Ignatius must have studied the letters from his son; especially in reading: "May God grant me His mercy through your merits in suchwise as to make me to understand, as far as I am capable of it, the debt I owe to the Society. Not, indeed, a complete realization, for this would be beyond my powers. But some measure of understanding, even if it be small."

The return trip to Goa proceeded. Seemingly Francis did not meet Yajiro at Cochin when he reached the city in late January, 1548. In a letter sent from Cochin to Rome, he mentions to Ignatius certain details, concerning China and Japan, which he has gathered from merchants and Yajiro. Ignatius himself could determine, in looking to the future, what type of Jesuit to send out for such mission efforts in hitherto unattempted fields. *I might not go to Japan myself* [Francis wrote] *but, if not, I can send two able Fathers. The probability is that I'll go myself.* The thought made him happy in its prospect. It was a contributing cause to his visible happiness of manner. A contemporary of this period related: "Father Francis is always one who seems to have his mouth crowded with laughter."

This joyousness of exterior made his visits to his brethren and converts in the mission stations doubly welcome. Visiting the pearl fisheries he was welcomed by the young Italian priest, Father

Criminale. In him Xavier sensed a kindred soul. "You can take my word for it," he wrote to Ignatius, "he is certainly a holy person, one whose character makes him seem born for this mission." Lovable and gentle Anthony Criminale was to fall, only five months later and at the age of twenty-nine, with mortal wounds inflicted by the lances of Madura tribesmen.

When Francis learned of the martyrdom, his feelings were akin to those with which he had formerly learned of the martyrs of Manar. Criminale's death resulted from a refusal to abandon his flock of Christians. He was the first in a long line, numbering almost a thousand Jesuit martyrs. Again Francis echoed his former thought: *God does not permit us, even in these times, to lack martyrs!*

If Xavier was not to experience similar martyrdom, in the technical sense of the word, he was destined to know a succession of further trials, a series of disappointments, hurts, and mental sufferings adding up to sacrifice, unbloody but of great magnitude.

On his return journey he saw much to confirm his belief that there was no recalling of the Portuguese colonials, or the majority of them, from their rapaciousness and callous cruelties toward the natives of India. Francis' exasperated indignation flares strikingly from the lines written with a bold hand from Cochin in January. The letter addressed to the King of Portugal is the more remarkable inasmuch as his former letters to King John were couched in discreet language. Now the apostle, rather than the royal emissary, is speaking.

"It's little short of martyrdom, Sire, to keep one's patience as one sees ruined what has slowly been built with extreme and laborious efforts! . . . Your Highness, as I have clearly learned, has no power to spread Christianity in India, at least as long as your position enables you to extract and enjoy the whole country's material resources. Forgive me for speaking so openly, but the unselfish esteem I have for you makes me do so. . . . Realizing what is going on here, Sire, I see I cannot successfully carry out my directives and plans, necessary to promote the Christian Faith. And so I've decided to hasten to Japan, rather than waste any further time."

It is a bold letter, compounded of priestly zeal and with an unconcern for its recipient's possible indignation. It was not to please a Portuguese king that a priest-son of Spain had traveled across oceans and sacrificed both earthly ambition and care for personal safety. The objective was single: the salvation of souls. This John must realize in his palace in Portugal. His own responsibilities should trouble him. Again Francis reminds the monarch of the hour of death.

"Your hour is much closer than you may realize. Prepare yourself for it, because earthly kingdoms and domains reach their end. You will encounter an experience, up until now unknown to your Majesty, of beholding yourself stripped of all your domains and properties, and of stepping into another in which (may God avert it!) you may have the experience of being sent out of Paradise."

History records few such letters, sent from a royal representative to the monarch responsible for the emissary's original departure. One is grateful to learn that, despite the forthright criticisms contained in Francis' successive letters to John III, the Portuguese King never questioned the integrity nor the honesty of the priest-ambassador he personally deemed a saint.

The same month of January, 1549, saw another treasured project thwarted. Again the salvation of souls was ranked secondary to the necessities of commerce and trade.

Francis had never forgotten his desire to return, or send other priests, to the Nestorian folk in Socotra. He had been captivated by the willingness to learn and by the simple kindness of the island's strayed Christians, people who had retained none of their former prayers beyond the one word *Alleluia!* Martin de Souza had insisted that Francis continue with him in direct journey to Goa. I will come back to Socotra one day, Francis told himself.

Now, seven years later, he made arrangements for two priests to go to the island to achieve what Francis originally wished to do. Everything was prepared for the journey. It was then that the order was given canceling the trip. Governor da Sa refused permission for the mission journey on the grounds that it probably would annoy the Moslems. In such case, the untroubled business relations

between Mohammedans and Portuguese would change and the change would be costly and for the worse. The protests of the priests availed them nothing.

Merchandising counted for more than the conversion of some natives on an insignificant island. Francis' grief was great but unavailing.

During his present sojourn in India (January, 1548, until May, 1549) Francis was continually on the move. Visits to Cochin, to the fisheries, to Kandy, and elsewhere, kept him occupied. Much needed to be accomplished. Prisons were to be improved. Hospitals and leper settlements needed his reforming and building efforts. The plans for improving the College of St. Paul, at Goa, for the training of a native clergy, consumed much of his time. He was sustained by his vision of the future of the faith in India and the islands, by his plans for China and Japan. Moments of desolation punctuated his schedule, such as his sense of grief when a shipment of mail arrived from Europe with no letter from Ignatius.

The unexpected death of Michael Vaz proved a blow. By it Francis lost the assistance of a man upon whom he had built great hopes for reforms in Goa. There was, moreover, the peculiar circumstance of Vaz's death to contend with.

Within the first month following his return to India, carrying powers which would have enabled him to help "clean up" the miserable conditions in Portuguese governmental circles, Vaz was murdered. His poisoning, at Chaul, is commonly believed to have been criminally effected by disgruntled Portuguese officials who resented the arrival of the new Inquisitor. To make matters worse, those concerned spread the rumor that the poisoning had been initiated by the aged Bishop Albuquerque. Francis relates his meeting with the prelate at Cochin where his friend and supporter was engaged with episcopal visitation. The prelate's patience, in the face of the scandalous rumors affecting him, impressed the missionary, and served to heighten Xavier's indignation against the whisperers who did not hesitate to attack with their lying tongues an aged and saintly shepherd of souls.

In his letter to King John, on January 20, Francis writes at

length to inform the monarch that the rumors touching the Bishop are both vicious and utterly without foundation. He protested that he had information which absolutely absolved Albuquerque from any implication in the Inquisitor's death. But (added Francis) he was not able to reveal the source of his information. The King could take his word for it. Knowing the esteem in which his correspondent was held by King John, it is not surprising that the latter accepted without question Francis' statement.

Francis was not without knowledge of the roles played by the monarchs of Spain and Portugal in this century of exploration and imperial expansion.

Under the sponsorship of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, Christopher Columbus opened the new Western world in 1492. "He is going to certain oceanic areas," the royal approval read, "in order to conduct affairs of interest to God and us." Pope Alexander VI recognized the sovereignty of Spain over these new possessions by the issuance of three Bulls in 1493. Thereafter followed the Pontiff's celebrated "line of division," dividing the new world into two parts: the line was west of the Azores and the Canary Islands and followed the 55° of longitude. East of the line were to be the possessions of Portugal; west of it, the possessions of Spain.

Xavier understood how easily a ruler, being "awarded" half the world, might let worldly ambition and desire for imperial expansion dull his sense of spiritual values.

Let the King of Portugal realize [Francis tells Rodriguez at this time] *his responsibility. As ruler he doesn't waste time in chastising those who interfere with imperial rights; let him, then, hasten to punish those who interfere with God's rights.* Perhaps the monarch might misunderstand it if Francis were to suggest he prayerfully ponder, for one hour daily, the scriptural reminder: "What shall it profit a man if he were to gain the entire world and yet suffer the loss of his soul?" Francis, it need scarcely be said, had had experience with the effect of that admonition upon a thoughtful young soul. "The time has come, dear Simon," he

concludes, "to make King John see the light. The hour is nearer at hand than he believes, the hour when the King of all kings will demand: 'Give an account of your stewardship.'"

In justice to King John it should be recalled that he did send Michael Vaz to curb corruption in India. It was no wish of the ruler that his juridical representative should swallow death-dealing poison within a month following arrival in the colonial empire. Again, in 1546, the King had sent directives to John de Castro, reminding the Governor of his Christian duty to safeguard the rights of Christianity, to punish native rulers who violated Christian principles, and to eliminate paganism in his domains.

An extraordinary intervention of Providence occurs about this time, in connection with the letter, previously mentioned, in which Francis tells Ignatius of his plans to go to Japan. The long delay in letters' arrival, going and coming from India to Europe, proved a blessing, at least as far as human judgment can discern.

While Francis' letter was getting under way, along slow sea-lane transportation, another letter was on its way to him. Peter Faber was dead. Ignatius, originally intending the gentle priest to be his possible successor in office, wanted to gather his first companions to discuss the matter of the Society's future. The matter of Ignatius' successor was worthy of careful consideration. Francis loomed in the minds of many Roman brethren as the logical successor to the Society's founder. The advice, at least, of Master Francis was needed. Seemingly, God intervened in the matter of Xavier's possible recall. The letters of the two saints crossed. But, when Ignatius' letter reached Goa, his "first son" was en route to the Japanese isles.

Meantime, even as Ignatius, Francis had to deal with Jesuits who needed restraint. Or, at times, correction.

Father Francis Enriquez had left his work at Travancore because of the local rajah's opposition. He went on to Calicut and Chaliyam. Francis had to send him back to Travancore.

Be not unhappy, Father [Francis tells the unhappy man] if the result of your labors is not evident in the beginning. Be mindful of the many little ones you have baptized. They have died, and gone to heaven. Think, indeed, how many souls, whether

they be in India or in any land, do not reach heaven, especially if they live beyond their fourteenth year.

Of utmost concern to Francis, and to cause him many a bitter moment, was the case of Father Mansilhas.

His companion of earliest days in India progressively manifested a lack of the spirit of obedience. This, to Francis, was intolerable. Orders given Mansilhas to go to the Moluccas had been disobeyed. Francis reluctantly came to the conclusion that his efforts to make Mansilhas into an understanding member of the Society had failed. He dismissed Mansilhas from the Order, but it is worth noting that, during his years of service as a secular priest, the former Jesuit remained devoted to the members of the Society. He stood forth, years later, as one of the important witnesses in the preliminary process for Xavier's canonization. And, dying in Cochin in 1565, Mansilhas insisted that he be attended by a priest of the Society.

Anthony Gomes, the whirlwind rector of the college at Goa, had succeeded in making himself obnoxious to all. The matter of his retaining office troubled not only those under his immediate charge but Xavier himself. Gomes' direction of men was overbearing and his judgments picayune to an exasperating degree. His officious explanations given to Francis, touching upon the need of collegiate expansion, left the saint unmoved. He reflected upon the troublesome situation. Rodriguez, as provincial in Portugal, was responsible for Gomes being in authority. Yet, Francis recalled, he had charge himself of Indian affairs.

Gaspard Baertz, Francis decided, would be much better in the rector's chair than Gomes. The problem was a delicate one. The influential Portuguese in Goa were impressed by Gomes' suavity of manner and by his grandiloquent discourses. Yet, the religious community and the collegiate personnel deserved consideration. For them, Gomes was no great shakes on any count.

As a solution, and with deep sighs of resignation, Francis made his decision. Let Gomes remain as rector of the college, but let all managements of the missionary priests be turned over to Camerino. Father Baertz was commissioned to go upon missionary endeavor to Ormuz.

Sooner or later the domestic difficulties in Goa would resolve themselves. Francis was anxious to leave them to others. He would be off to Japan. His three years in the Malayan archipelago had merely whetted his appetite for more mission activity.

Meantime, while planning his coming journey, he made a swift visitation of his previous mission centers and instructed both converts and the priests who directed their spiritual formation.

Yajiro was baptized on Whitsunday by the Bishop of Goa. In the Japanese convert Xavier saw a happy omen of further Japanese converts to come with the aid of providence. Yajiro told Francis of a rumor, persistent in Japan, of the coming of strangers to preach a new religion.

"We'll see," the priest answered with a smile.

Before leaving for a quick visitation of the fisheries, Francis had the joy of welcoming five new missionaries, arrived for the Indian mission. One of them, writing home, reported: "Father Francis was still at Goa, preparatory to his departure for Cape Comorin. He wanted to greet us, to hear news of the Society, and to make us welcome. He sent us food when the ship arrived, and urged us to land soon, because of his yearning to see us and learn what news we brought of the Society. This we did, and no pen could describe adequately the happiness of Master Francis, nor our gratitude to him. One should hear his praise of God, when we gave him news of the Society's growth. And one should listen as he tells everything the Lord has, by means of the brethren, achieved here and in other areas."

Of interest is the description of Francis, given about this time by one meeting him for the first time.

"Father Francis is a man neither short nor tall. His presence is striking, although not at first calculated to attract immediate attention. His face is open, and his eyes ever raised upward, and often moist with the tears sprung from an inward emotion. His lips are smiling. He does not speak much, but his words can move one's emotions strongly.

"Often you'll hear him exclaim: 'Jesus! Most Holy Trinity!' And he frequently exhorts us: 'My brothers, how much better is our God than any of us can imagine! Think on this, and

then render Him praise. Pay Him your debt of gratitude, because our Society has been confirmed in so short a time, and this is so because our Lord desires to achieve much through the Society as His means. This you will see realized, before very long, in Japan whither I am soon to travel.'

"Francis spoke all of this so ardently that some of us cried. His loving discourse was such that it moved us with desire for both suffering and toil. In order to heighten this, he related some of his own labors. The reputation he enjoys, in the many areas and lands he has visited, is beyond my description. Even now, during his life, his fame is so widespread that his name is known through all of India. Actually, out here, a man reckons himself blessed if he is known as a friend of Father Francis Xavier."

This description, outspoken and spontaneous, traces in outline the saint who is about to move on to a greater field (as he conceived it) of activity. His departure would come in April, 1549.

Before that he spent two months in Cochin. The mission stations were so far from Goa that he decided to name local superiors for each of them. Ignatius, his "holy father" to whom he "wrote upon his knees," was informed that he hoped much from Japan. "There in that land are no Mohammedans nor Jews, but only Gentiles, and they are curious to learn of a new religion. The Society should be able to achieve much in the midst of such a people."

He reveals his plans to go to the royal court of the Japanese ruler. Later, to the Japanese universities wherein he might have influence with the open minds of Japanese students.

He will send an account of the Japanese literature when he has had discussions with the university professors. The University of Paris will have especial interest in these accounts, and can pass them on to other universities in Europe. In April or May the expedition will get under way, with the Japanese converts in company. Also with the Valencian priest, Cosmo Torres. Stops will be made in Malacca and perhaps in China. If Ignatius thought it advisable, could not Father Rodriguez and other Jesuits come to India in the meantime? These men would be of inestimable

value in Goa, especially at the college. Perhaps, moreover, Ignatius might write a general letter of advice to all the Society in the East? In any event, do permit one of the Fathers in Rome to write him at length of Society affairs in Europe, especially about the recently professed brethren. The letter could be forwarded to him via Malacca and on to Japan.

Ignatius, upon receiving such a letter, could not but have marveled at the divine guidance which led him to this man Xavier in the halls of the University of Paris. His eldest son, whom later times have judged his dearest, was more than justifying the wisdom which drew Xavier to his side in Paris. And the judgment which, no matter what the separation cost, generously surrendered Xavier to the East in the role of mission priest.

A letter went directly to Simon Rodriguez at Lisbon. Francis, although occupied with plans and preparation, was not out of touch with immediate needs of the mission. Would Father Simon send eight or ten casks of wine, as a regular shipment, to Goa? Wine was too expensive in Goa, where the priests in Malacca and other stations had to get it. The Chinese ports were closed to the Portuguese and other foreigners. So, kindly send the wine directly. But, one might add, this closing of Chinese ports in no way meant that the expedition to adjacent Japan would be abandoned.

Meantime the domestic situation in Goa seemed sufficiently resolved. Father Camerino would remain as general superior of all the Jesuits and, as a vice-provincial, would handle the mission priests who would make their reports to his desk. Father Gomes was to manage the college. Let both men "govern their respective spheres of activity with no semblance of pride or violence." Francis, at this time, could not foresee, although he might have feared it, that the day was coming when he would be forced to take from Gomes even the charge of the students.

The missionaries? For each of them Francis had an especial affection. Having traversed the paths and jungles, the sandy beaches and the way of the pioneer himself, he best understood the discouragement they would so often face during his absence. To each he would write, therefore, a letter of encouragement

before he sailed for Malacca and Japan. To each was sent instructions for work in the particular area concerned. To each was sent affectionate assurance of prayers and the pledge to be mindful of the mission priest in all trials lying ahead.

Now the way was open, the plans completed. Japan, that land of pagan islands rising in volcanic formation from the Pacific Ocean, seemed to loom through the mists of uncertainty. These islands and their pagan-controlled empire seemed closer now, as the spring of 1549 brought closer the sailing date. In God's hands would be the outcome but He would not be wanting. This was His work, after all.

Francis, preparing to embark, prayed to the guardian angels of the people of Japan. They would inspire and guide him aright. He also added his devotional devoirs to the angels of the people of China. Already in his mind he bracketed the peoples of the two great nations. Friends were not wanting who would dissuade him from a voyaging which might well, once one had laid aside all enthusiastic conjectures inspired by religious zeal, result in his death. Part of their protests stemmed from a desire to keep their father in God close to them in India. Ahead lay unknown waters, typhoons, and the threat of a hostile race. Or at least a people concerning whom too little was known.

Francis smiled and dismissed their protestations. "As a matter of fact," he confided to Rodriguez in one of his last letters from India, "they really alarm me, these well-meaning friends. Not by their recital of dangers I might encounter. They, of course, are as nothing. What concerns me in all of this is the lack of faith shown in these protests. Are these friends losing their faith in the good God?"

His friends might be wanting in faith. In any event, as history has rejoiced to record, there was no want of it in the man who sailed for Malacca and Japan in April of 1549. In his leather wallet he carried letters from the Bishop of Goa and from Governor da Silva, impressive documents penned upon parchment and to be presented to the ruler of Japan. Francis was to be an ambassador from Portugal itself and received as such.

Francis' mouth was "crowded with laughter," as one man had

said of him earlier, as he stood upon deck and the Indian breeze swept seaward and touched his face. His hand touched the wallet containing the letters of credence.

"I have better resources than these," he said with a smile to Father de Torres, standing beside him. "You shall see."

[Chapter 16]

EARLY DAYS IN JAPAN

As Francis sailed from India, he left behind him the scene of his first mission activities, to which he would return later. The vast territory which is India has properly been called "the first love of the Jesuits as a missionary land."

Four centuries after Xavier first reached Goa, an anniversary celebrated in 1941, India contained 1201 sons of the Society. In the large island of Ceylon another 98 were at work. These Jesuits were familiar with the *Litterae Indicae*, that precious record initiated by Francis under the directive of Ignatius, his *Padre mio unico*. Europe found, in these pages, the first authentic account of Eastern conditions since the reports received from Marco Polo. Catching some of the fire of their author, the "Letters" flamed with zeal and invitation to others to join this widespread enterprise for the kingdom of Christ. Young men in Europe "saw visions and the old men dreamed dreams." The spur to more mission effort in the Indies was thrown westward by the eldest son of Father Ignatius.

In increasing numbers Francis' European brethren came to the East to further the work he began so powerfully. By 1549 their number will justify the erection of the Indian province. Francis, sailing from India for Japan, was the natural choice as superior. Houses and college at Goa, other colleges being undertaken at Bassein and Cochin, and Jesuit priests working for Christ in the fisheries, in Malacca, the Moluccas — the Indian

mission reflected in the spiritual plane the century's spirit of adventure-laden expansion and exploration and conquest.

"Faith," observed St. James, "is dead without works." Works there were aplenty in the mission stages of the Orient. These works increased even while Francis roamed the deck of a sailing ship in April, 1549, heading for more labors of his own choosing.

So zealous in labor and so unsullied in personal life were these brothers of Xavier, throughout the over-all mission, that the Viceroy wrote to Simon Rodriguez in their praise. "These men," he reported, "reflect in their lives and labors the Apostles of old." Meanwhile, in the same year of 1549, other sons of Ignatius were laboring in distant Brazil with such intelligent planning that the General raised their mission to the status of a province.

Happily, Francis faced the future. With him aboard ship traveled Father de Torres, Brother Juan Fernandes, and three Japanese, Paul Yajiro and his two servants, Joam and Antonio. These made up the group destined for Japan. Accompanying the group, and bound for the Moluccas, were Father de Castro and others of the Society. During a short stay at Cochin, Father de Castro preached with such eloquence that it was only with difficulty that Francis succeeded in getting the priest back aboard ship.

On May 31 the vessel landed at Malacca. A meeting took place which brought Francis joy and sorrow. Father Perez had been working alone, to the point of exhaustion, in Malacca for a year. No word of complaint passed the lips in the thin face confronting Francis. "It embarrasses me beyond expression," Francis wrote, "when I behold the amount of good achieved by only one man, and he so thin and sickly." He could not know that the last of all the letters he himself would send upon earth would be addressed to this saintly Father Perez.

Edifying, too, in the extreme was the report brought him in Malacca of Father Beira's success with the head-hunters of the Moro jungles. Men of the stamp of Perez and Beira left him lost in admiration for the heroism of such missionaries. That history would record his own achievements together with, if not ahead, of theirs never crossed his mind. His thoughts were

turning, unexpectedly, to certain men of less stature whom he had left behind in India.

"There is our strange Father Gomes," he said quietly to De Torres. "What will be the future there in India of a man who believes any young members of the Society who become restless beneath his domineering command should be returned to Portugal in chains?"

De Torres' lips drew together grimly. "We will pray for Master Gomes, certainly. And we might also pray that he does not further antagonize other Religious Orders who arrived in India long before the Society's priests."

Perhaps, thought Francis, Gomes might profit by a letter of gentle counsel sent now from Malacca. It is easier to take suggestions, implicitly unflattering, when one is not face to face with one's counselor. "I most earnestly urge upon you," he wrote to Gomes, "that you cultivate love, friendship, and kindness with all the saintly friars of the Orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic. Be most devoted to all of these men, and let no cause for disedification come up between you and them. You might indeed visit from time to time with them, and thus they will understand how much love you have for them."

The letter was dispatched with prayers seconding it. The advice was practical and fraternal. But it proved futile.

No ships were scheduled to leave directly for Japan. Francis refused certain merchants' suggestion that he sail with them and spend the winter on the Chinese coast. Pedro da Gama, son of the celebrated Vasco, was a captain seconding such invitations. The offer was gently refused. Delay for almost an entire year before reaching the Japanese shore? It was unthinkable.

"Well," the captain said reluctantly, "so be it. But at least permit me to give you about thirty bushels of Malacca pepper. Sell them, when you do get to Japan. That will give you funds with which to build yourself a chapel. I'll also give you a goodly supply of gifts for the Emperor. It might," added the worldly-wise Da Gama, "help persuade him that you should remain in his kingdom."

Francis' thanks were followed by a request, in a letter to King

John, to reward the generosity of Da Gama. "He could not have been kinder to us if we had been his own brothers. Your Majesty will know how to repay him for his help, because your servant is entirely too poor to do so."

Providence now advanced Francis' plans. A Chinese captain of a ship, little more than a junk, appeared, willing to take Francis and his companions to Japan. Last-minute preparations were completed and Xavier cleaned up remaining business.

Word was sent to Gomes and Camerino to open any letters addressed to him by the King, and then to send on the letter after taking care of anything pertaining to local administration or business; to send word frequently of the progress of priests and scholastics and brothers. "I am anxious that you fill up two or three large pages with such accounts, even so that I can behold the picture, as it were, with my own eyes." He asked them to tell him, moreover, of the progress of the boys in the college; one (perhaps Diego of Mozambique?) could write in the name of all the students. A last letter to Rodriguez: perhaps Simon could send out a man suitable to replace Father Gomes in office. At least this is desirable. A final note to the priests in the Islands of Spice: be prepared for a possible call from myself summoning you to Japan if the occasion warrants. This same advice is likewise relayed to the priests in India. Two days before the day of embarkation from Malacca (June 24), a final directive: Since I may be away for a few years, let me with this writing name Father Lancilotti as the worker for the Comorin coast.

Commentators upon the "marvelous" in Francis' life make much of this appointment. Had Francis indeed "vision" of the murder of Father Criminale, killed by the Badages on June 16? Criminale had been sent as superior to the Comorin coast by Francis himself. Why then, this present directive? Francis could not have known by natural means of Criminale's murder. Yet he could have appointed Lancilotti at the earlier time of Criminale's naming, if he thought the former would have been a better leader in Comorin.

The incident is not proof positive that Francis had super-

natural intuition. But historians maintain that "it gives one to think."

The square-built Chinese ship sailed on June 24, carrying beneath its spread sails Francis, De Torres, Paul (of the Holy Faith) Yajiro, Fernandes, and the three other men making up Xavier's party. The captain was by instinct and frequent exercise a pirate. Like many of the piratical fraternity, when visiting seaports and populated areas, the man masked his profession beneath the guise of a trader.

From the ship's rail Francis, shading his eyes with his hand, saw two friends waving farewell from the receding dock. One was the commandant, Peter da Silva, who had impressed upon the Chinese captain the all-important necessity of delivering Francis safely at the priest's destination. If he did not return with a letter, signed by Xavier and attesting the successful completion of the voyage, the captain's wife and children would be sold into slavery and his ship and monies taken by the Portuguese authority.

Also waving farewell was young John Bravo. Francis spent the preceding night with this nineteen-year-old youth in the Church of Our Lady of the Mount, giving the young Portuguese advice and spiritual direction. John had come to the Indies to seek his fortune. He found it in a vocation to the Society, and Xavier was busy, typically enough, on his last night ashore preparing the young man for his trip to Goa. There John would make the *Spiritual Exercises* and begin his Jesuit career.

A section of the *Monumenta* contains two documents, written for John's instruction by Francis at Malacca. One deals with the practice of meditation and the other with the proper approach to living the life of the Society. Xavier stresses the complete necessity of practicing humility, obedience, and abnegation of self — "without which you can be useful neither to yourself nor to others, nor can you please God, and so you would make impossible your continuance in the Society of Jesus."

Francis speaks of proposed abstinences to Ignatius.

The Japanese [he wrote] *have already told me that the Bonzes*

[whom they call the "Fathers of the Japanese"] *would be scandalized if they saw the missionaries, any of us, eating meat or fish. So, lest scandal be given, I propose to abstain from these foods.*

The Bonzes are many in number, and held in esteem by people in all ranks of society. Paul Yajiro described the monastery with many "friars" and educated men practicing their own prayer methods. These pagan priests, moreover, preach every two weeks to great crowds of listeners, men and women alike. The women not infrequently weep and faint at the preacher's description of "hell" and its punishments. Pictures of the latter are often shown to heighten the speaker's impression. Paul recalls one sermon in which it was said: "An evil man is worse than the devil, for he makes others to commit sins, which he could not commit himself at times, etc."

Reading between the lines Ignatius could not but sense the enthusiasm which filled Xavier as the ship progressed northward. The Japanese people were known, it seems, to be religious by instinct. What remained but to pluck this fruit from the tree of paganism? Especially since their beliefs were often akin to Christian doctrines? Surely God was preparing for a successful invasion, by His knight errant, of the Empire of Dai Nippon.

In the same year in which Francis reached Hindustan (1542) some Portuguese merchants had "discovered" the isles of Japan. Before that, the Japanese traded with China. Of other nations they seemed blissfully unaware. Agriculture was a prominent activity in Japan, and with it went a high degree of education and general culture. The presence of silver mines in Japan led the Castilians to name the isles *Islas Platerias*.

The question arises, whence the name *Japan*? It was customary for the inhabitants of the island empire to call their country *Tino moyo*. In their written, or literary, language the name used was *Nifon* or *Nippon*: the origin or birth of the sun. Hence the popular expression, familiar to later centuries, the "Land of the Rising Sun." The Chinese pronounced the name *Japuen* or *Jopuen*. And the Portuguese pronounced this *Japan*.

It was to Japan, then, that one of history's outstanding apostles proceeded in 1549, a journey famous in mission annals. Few

more interesting accounts of mission journeys exist than Francis' description of the sea voyage to Japan. He tells of it in the longest letter he ever wrote.

"We sailed in the afternoon of St. John's feast day, on the vessel of the pagan Chinese trader. Through God's favor we had both good wind and sailing conditions. Pagans are most changeable, and the captain began to make stops, even without necessity, at various islands. His mind seemed to have changed even about going on to Japan itself. Most annoying was his failure to utilize the good wind and weather when we had them, and similarly his unending prayers and sacrifices before the idol carried on the ship. We could not stop this practice."

The joss sticks of the captain and crew, burned to honor their heathen deity, irritated the passengers. But other aspects of this strange voyage colored their irritation and, at times, filled them with a sense of danger.

Francis was annoyed at certain island stops, made to take on board extra rigging and rudders, insurance against increasing bad weather which should have been attended to before sailing from Malacca. The Chinese Sea was a notoriously bad crossing. Consulting their deity, the crew learned the passage to China would be achieved. But, the oracle informed them, they would not see Malacca again. Suspicious and unfriendly eyes began turning toward the passengers. Perhaps they should be cast overboard? Storms arose with fierce intensity as the little ship buffeted the waves off Cochin China. A lurch of the vessel threw the Chinese convert, Manoel, into the hold. So much water had been shipped, during the punishing storm, that the man was nearly drowned.

Francis and his company rescued the gasping Manoel. While they worked on the deck to revive him, another heave of the ship flung the captain's daughter from the ship's deck. While the girl's stricken father watched, horrified, she was swallowed up by the waves, beyond rescue. The sailors, consulting their deity in panic and awe, "learned" that the girl would have been spared if, indeed, Manoel had been drowned.

The situation grew more tense with each succeeding moment. Superstitious pagans muttered to themselves, their expressions

telling Francis and his companions that the travelers were obviously the cause of all trouble up to this moment. What further trouble would the priests bring them? Francis held his head high. His companions caught their cue from their untroubled leader.

"God," he told them quietly, "will protect us. And we shall complete our journey."

Perhaps it was the fear of the threat of the Commandant Da Silva, waiting resolutely in Malacca for the captain's return, which prompted the ship's master to restrain his crew members. Fortunately, the storms passed, and with the coming of good weather the ship's company revived their spirits. It was, after all, the captain's daughter who had been lost. If *he* wanted to forgive the passengers for this misfortune, the crew would forget the matter.

The little ship reached Canton. Here, the sailors assured themselves, we will spend the winter. Why risk further danger? The answer to the question was provided by Francis himself. "You will carry out your bargain," he informed the captain, "or I will report you immediately to Da Silva in Malacca."

The shrewd, calculating Chinese weighed the matter. Above all else he must not ruin his profitable career in free-riding piracy. A compromise could be worked out. "We will sail farther north," he decided, "to a port I know. We will see, meantime, how the sailing conditions develop."

Francis suspected, although he did not say so, that the captain was going to avoid the crossing of the sea to Japan if he could possibly do so. Something, he told himself, will happen. God wants me to go to Japan. Therein lay the beginning and the end.

God did provide. As the vessel moved slowly northward, the winds began to shift with increasing strength. The ship was being blown off the course charted by the captain. His efforts to maintain straight course proved unavailing. Steadily the ship veered off, heading slowly into the Japanese waters. Francis, studying the winds and his sailing charts, smiled quietly to himself.

"You are indeed going to Japan now, aren't you?"

The Chinese shrugged. "But of course," he replied evenly, his expressionless features dissolving into the semblance of a smile, "and why not? Isn't that what we have agreed to do?"

On the feast of our Lady's Assumption, a bright mid-August day in 1549, Francis Xavier landed at Kagoshima, the southernmost city of the four isles of Japan.

"Neither the devil, nor his servants, were able to keep us from reaching our goal." Writing his account Francis relived the joyousness of that day of arrival. "It has been God Himself who brought us to this sought-for country. We reached Kagoshima, where Paul Yajiro was born, and where his relations, as well as many others, welcomed us with much affection."

It was a happy omen. Or so it seemed. The zeal burning in his soul seemed to cry out to Francis that the winning of this empire for Christ would now be but a matter of time. The event proved otherwise. Fortunately Francis could not know this at the time of his arrival. He had reached his Promised Land and this was enough.

An unexpected bout with scruples and doubts, moreover, was now behind him. Watching the Chinese upon the ship, as they offered incense to their pagan deity, Francis had been troubled by his proximity to this constant worship of wood and clay. There was something devil-inspired and grotesque about the heathen ritual. His disgust suddenly passed into a period of doubt about himself and his motivation. Was it possible, after all, that his almost singlehanded assault upon a heathen empire was prompted, not by selfless love and service of the true God, but by an insidious species of self-will and self-satisfying pride?

The anxious, troubled hours passed. But not before, as he recorded, "Our Lord, in that day and night, gave me the grace of sensing and knowing by experience to the utmost the racking, anguished fears which, when God permits, the Enemy can inspire."

The arrival in Kyushu's southernmost city filled Xavier with joy and hope. Paul Yajiro proceeded first to the castle of his feudal lord. This Prince of Satsuma welcomed him with that native courtesy which seems second nature to the Japanese. Paul's early crime, for which he had to flee Japan, was dismissed with

a wave of a well-manicured hand. "Tell me," urged the Prince, "of your travels, what wonders you have seen, what men you have encountered? One should not return from voyaging with silent mouth."

Paul, with little delay, launched into glowing descriptions of the Christian religion, its priests, its purity of doctrine. The Prince listened thoughtfully. One outstanding member of this priesthood is here now? Paul drew from the folds of his dress a picture painted on wood, representing our Lady and the Infant Jesus. "Here," he said quickly, "this is for you. The priest of whom I have spoken wishes me to present it to you." The Prince, and his attendant courtiers, were fascinated by the graceful workmanship of the painting. They bowed to it in native fashion.

"I must see this honorable priest," the Prince announced to his retinue. His smile and his bow to Yajiro would, three centuries later, have done honor to Sullivan's *Mikado*. "Meantime, I will send it to my lady mother."

Paul Yajiro bowed gratefully. All was well. As the event proved, the Prince's mother was more interested in Christianity than her son, and engaged Yajiro to tell her of the life of Christ, and then to write it for her in Japanese characters.

There was that in the atmosphere of this land of cherry trees and plum trees, of quaint figured dresses, of the lotus flower sacred to Buddha and the deep-green magnolia branches, which appealed to Francis' love of beauty, part of his Basque inheritance. His first contacts with the Japanese were cordial and expressions of friendship, through the medium of interpreters, were exchanged on both sides. These people, as his letters would indicate, were the people most dear to his heart. They would become, some of them, his most steadfast converts. The ignorance and squalor marking the minds and dwellings of Tamil and Malayan converts were temporarily forgotten in this land with distinct culture. The change, whether Francis sensed it or not, was welcome to one whose early years were passed in an atmosphere of refinement. Even the poor of Japan walked with a quiet sense of dignity and honor.

"Their sense of honor is great and admirable. Honor is prized above all other gifts."

Perhaps, in writing such tribute, Francis recalled the want of personal integrity and honor among the Europeans to be found throughout the Portuguese colonial empire.

"These people are, for the most part, poor. However, the high ruling class, no more than the poor themselves, do not consider lack of wealth blameworthy. They have a characteristic which I do not think is to be found among Christians: nobles who have become poor and plebians who have accumulated wealth, both honor a very poor noble even as if he were wealthy. Nothing would induce a poor noble to wed within the plebian ranks, not even to gain a fortune. Marrying into a lower caste would be a loss of honor, and honor matters more than money here."

Most important, of course, was the possibility of planting the seeds of the Faith among these people. "I want you to understand something for which we may thank God our Lord. This land of Japan is well prepared for a great growth of our holy religion within it."

Much reliance had to be placed upon Paul Yajiro, that "broken reed" upon which Francis had to depend so much. From him he would slowly learn more and more of customs and attitudes. In company with Yajiro Francis began to take instruction in the native language. "May God be disposed to grant us the gift of language," Francis wrote, "that we might then speak of His affairs. . . . For the present, we are like statues in the midst of these people. We have to be silent while they speak at length all around us. I believe we must indeed become as little children to master the tongue of Japan. May God give us, also, to imitate little children in simplicity and innocence of heart."

The matter of language remains the predominant, initial hazard facing every missionary in foreign fields. Obviously its mastery is essential for success.

Francis lost no time in beginning to learn the Japanese tongue. His studies kept him working far into the night. His efforts at preaching, with the none too literate Yajiro beside him as

interpreter, were failures. Clearly the coming months must first be devoted to bridging the language barrier.

"Also, this winter, I think we shall attempt to draw up a written presentation of the articles of faith in the language of the Japanese. The leaders of this people can read and write and hence we will have a method of spreading far and wide our religion, especially since we ourselves cannot come to everybody's assistance."

Conversions were slow. Francis was to "fish with the rod rather than the net." Haltingly, but with confidence, he had long "conversations" with the courteous Bonzes. Francis was not naïve enough to be unaware that frequently the Bonzes covered an instinctive hostility by their smiling, bowing interest in his exposition of Christian truths.

Above all he knew a confidence in the beginnings of this Japanese mission which was different from the dismay marking his early days in India. With such ardent envisioning of the future, characteristic of his hopeful zeal, he, too, was "dreaming dreams" of further success.

His first letter from Japan to the priests in Goa bespeaks a rosy prospect, inviting their attention to the possibility of their going to China even as he has come to Japan. "You could travel there," he says, "in safety, beneath the protection of the king of Japan. He will, I feel sure, be our friend, and he is a close friend of the King of China." And how long will this work take? Francis has his answer. "We are confident that, God permitting us another ten years, we will all witness great achievements in these areas by men coming from your region."

There is no restraining an enthusiast. Francis already spoke of the ruler of Japan as if he were just around the corner, a man with whom he had already had rewarding conference. Actually, in regard to this king a real problem arose. Just who was the chief ruler of Japan amidst so many Daimyo (tribal) lords? These chiefs were found all over Japan, each considering himself a separate ruling entity favored by heaven, a bright sun about whom, in their respective lesser orbits, lesser stars whirled in the spheres of regional authority. Anarchy, rather than unity, was the mark of

Japanese government in the respective islands at the time of Xavier's arrival.

The legal Emperor, or *Dairi*, had been superseded by individualists. His person, surrounded by a few faithful women retainers, remained now in a poor setting at Kyoto. Actually, the Mikado was without funds, well advanced in years, and abandoned. His political generalissimo, the Shogun, was in reality a frightened and ineffectual youth.

It was good for Francis' spirit that he did not realize much of this. The Japanese *Bushido*, or Way of the Samurai, was a system of honor, and it appealed to the hidalgo in Xavier. Certain vices were present among the Japanese but Francis deemed the virtues to outnumber them. Upon the basic *Bushido*, the courtesy, and the religious mind of these people he would work. And with success. Or so he believed. In the end the work was exhausting, the success partial. And the going was rough.

[Chapter 17]

“WHAT IS THIS LAW YOU BRING THE JAPANESE?”

Francis Xavier was one of those stepping upon the stage of the sixteenth century who would help influence new ways of thought and action.

Historians acknowledge the sixteenth as a century of progress. No word characterizes the era so well as *change*. A new order appeared in many spheres, new wines were being poured into old bottles. Columbus inverted the notions of his time respecting the world men live in. The result was a vast change in industry, exploration, wealth, and national growth. Men seized upon the political teaching of Machiavelli and “delivered” government, as they thought, from restraint by law. Erasmus grasped the current of the older learning and turned it into humanistic channels. The scientist-thinker Copernicus orientated man’s position in the scheme of things, reducing our earth to a minor position but stimulating forward studies in the material universe above men’s heads. Luther shook the house of Christendom with a revolt that resulted in a cure worse than the disease it aimed to remedy.

The Mother Church, responsive to the needs of the age, embarked on exploration and an evangelism which flowered in mission activity in hitherto unexplored corners of the world. At home the challenge thrown down by self-appointed reformers was picked up by the able hands of a Thomas More and a Peter Canisius. The Church ranged abroad but there was never the problem of a “point of no return.” The return was ever and always back to the unity of faith and doctrine and authority centered in Rome and in the person of the Vicar of Christ.

On many fronts, meanwhile, the Church expanded. Its missionaries established footholds, necessary foundations for the planting of roots of faith. The members of the youthful Society of Jesus had a large share in such work. In the same year that Francis Xavier set foot within Japan, the first Jesuits to enter the “new world” landed in Brazil, four priests bent upon planting Christianity in the largest area of South America. Before his death, Ignatius would have the satisfaction of raising the Jesuit foundation in Brazil to the status of a province.

Francis’ arrival in Japan occurred in the same year as the Jesuit arrival in Brazil, 1549. As already suggested, the government of the islands was in a state near anarchy. The Emperor was a nonentity, the rule of Japan in the real order being exercised by various Daimyos. Sixty or seventy of these petty princes ruled serenely in their respective districts. They occupied themselves with successive wars against each other. The Buddhist monasteries, well organized and commanding armed forces in many instances, exercised strong influence. The progress of infant Catholicism, as it advanced, would receive its strongest antagonism from these monasteries and their rulers. Added to the missionaries’ difficulties, moreover, was the Japanese indifference, often amounting to hostility, to the entry of foreigners within the islands.

Xavier fortunately did not appreciate the various forces, latent but slowly to emerge, which arrayed themselves against his work. He would work at Kagoshima, then make his progress northward to Kyoto to see the Emperor. When the time came to travel to the principal island of Honshu, with this visit as objective, Francis might have been deterred had he known of the relative impotency of the Emperor.

Francis had rather been inquiring of the background of the current condition of culture in Japan. From the ninth to the twelfth century, he learned, the Japanese passed through a type of Renaissance. This was the *Hara* and *Heian* eras, periods of high learning and art advance. From the twelfth century to the time of Xavier’s arrival, the emphasis had been upon the military spirit, furthered by a series of incessant civil wars. Arts and sciences were neglected in these latter eras. The Samurai, or war-

riors, were the men who were most important in Japan. Their devotion, fanatical at times, to the code of *Bushido*, or honor, was paramount. It is understandable to a twentieth century in which a war brought this spirit up against Western armed forces.

Francis did not neglect inquiries concerning the present state of rule and government within the island empire. The answers he received, however, were varied, evasive, and mixed. Obviously, to him, the necessary procedure was to work at the language and to look to winning the Emperor's support.

The work at first centered within Kagoshima. With dismay he sensed that Bonzes, men with doctrines originally imported from India, promoted a system of idolatry. Ancestor worship was prevalent and therein lay a psychological hazard, to be approached with delicacy and simplicity. To work, then. Forty days of consecutive study, and then Francis was able to explain the Ten Commandments in Japanese. But little else. Meanwhile Francis, in his prayers, placed Japan under the protection of St. Michael the Archangel.

It was a long and trying winter, those months of 1549 and 1550. Francis must have been mindful in this period of the winters he had spent in north Italy years before. He confessed that he often felt he was "dying of the cold." With Brother Fernandes' help and that of Yajiro, he was able during this winter to produce an exposition of the Christian doctrine. It was weak, inelegant in linguistic expression, but nevertheless basically correct. Then Francis went about the crooked streets of the town, explaining to all who would listen the truths of his faith.

"Come and hear me," he called to idlers, merchants, children, and any within sound of his inviting voice. Many, indeed, did listen to this Western man of God, partly intrigued by his odd manner of speech, partly prompted by that cold courtesy of indifferent curiosity which street preachers have always received in every locality.

Converts were slow in approaching the priest. One prospect of seeming importance to the missionary was a Buddhist abbot, named Ninjit. This worthy's name meant "Heart of Truth." To Francis, however, Buddhism took the heart out of truth. Never-

theless, Francis made a great impression upon the monk, although he did not succeed in bringing his prospect to the point of request for Christian baptism.

The event proved that conversion would be slow. The end of the first year's work resulted in the conversion of only about a hundred Japanese. Yajiro's original promises and predictions about his countrymen's mass conversions had been rudely jolted and disproved. But Francis, nevertheless, did not give up hope. The mission was a new one. Give it time to progress and grow.

With the cold winter setting in, and Francis' extremely difficult hours of Japanese language study, the missionary was "a virtual prisoner of Kagoshima" during the months between arrival in August and the following summer. Yajiro, whenever opportunity offered and he was questioned in the matter by the local Daimyo, loudly proclaimed Francis' reputation with the *Nambanjin*. This was the Japanese term of reference ("the Barbarians of the South") to the Portuguese in India and the Straits. Largely because of this the Daimyo deferred his granting of permission for Francis to leave for the Emperor's court.

Francis, acknowledging to his companions that protocol would bring rewards if observed despite delays and exasperation, had some consolation in the small, albeit steady, number of converts. His catechism, now in Japanese, furthered his efforts. It is recorded that God was not wanting to his servant during the winter months of this first year in Japan. Miracles occurred, notably the cure of a child afflicted with hydropsy. Brought to Francis by its mother, the child was placed in Xavier's arms. The Western visitor gazed with pity and sympathy upon the afflicted boy. His eyes lifted heavenward.

"May our God favor thee." The words were scarcely uttered when the child stirred, infused with new life and health. The same occurred when a man, afflicted with leprosy but promising conversion if God cured him, was restored to health. Francis, moreover, is credited with suddenly bringing good fishing conditions to the local bay, hitherto barren of fish.

Francis' zeal caused him to write letters whenever his voice could not reach those whom he wished to influence. A remarkable story

illustrates his indifference to obstacles in the matter of getting his letters sent, once they were written. The winter of 1549 we know to have been severe. Since Francis could not send his letters from Kagoshima, he walked the nearly three hundred miles in the snow and cold between that town and the port town of Hirado. He had learned that a Portuguese vessel waited there for sailing. To the ship's captain he handed the letters for India and Europe.

To his "patron," the commandant at Malacca, went round thanks for his assistance in helping Francis reach Japan. The commandant would have no further need to worry about the pirate captain of the ship transporting the missionaries: the "Pirate" had died at Kagoshima, still clinging to his pagan deity. Yajiro's most enthusiastic descriptions of Malacca, given with gestures to his fellow countrymen, had already set some of them talking of a visit to Malacca. The commandant would be kind enough to receive them warmly for in this way they might be brought nearer conversion to Christianity.

To his priest brethren, Francis pours forth his incessant love of his fellow members of the Society.

"I end my letter quite unable to express the great affection I have for each and all of you. If one could in this life gaze into the hearts of those who love each other, be sure, my dearest brothers, you would be discerned within mine. . . . Permit no discord to grow in your midst. Turn much of your zeal into love for each other. Turn some of your longing for suffering for Christ into mutual understanding for His sake, and into overriding any antipathy which might prevent this love from growing."

A man is seen in his letters, especially if he is as prolific in correspondence as was Xavier. Together with his expressed affection there is found, when he deemed it necessary, a word of fraternal advice.

"I beseech you," he writes the petulant Gomes, "to win for yourself the affection of all the Society's brethren, of those in the college, and, through your letters to them, of workers in other areas." To this sincere advice Francis added a request. "I beg of you to tell me of your spiritual life. You realize what

happiness this will give me and how it will comfort me in my heavy problems and difficulties here. Most of all, I would be happiest to learn that all the Society members, in your community and outside of it, loved you dearly.”

It is in glimpsing some of the pages of the letters that one understands why Francis took great pains to have them sent. His horizon never was restricted to those within sight of his eyes. His plans were far reaching and embraced co-workers, wherever they might be toiling.

The long winter months passed. During them Francis, with the assistance of Yajiro and Brother Fernandes, continued his study of language and his talks to the people. He became accustomed, especially in the earlier months, to certain people who were not above mocking him in public places. He was consoled in the realization that such insult was not characteristic of the Japanese people. Those who mocked him, moreover, were frequently taking their cue, on their own uneducated level, from certain enemies on a higher social level.

The number of converts totaled in the neighborhood of six hundred before the trip was undertaken northward to Yamaguchi. Against this pleasant consideration was the irritation of the Daimyo of Kagoshima. He was annoyed particularly because of Francis' trip to the Daimyo of Hirado, with whom at the time he enjoyed a state of complete enmity. Added to this was the knowledge that a Portuguese ship had favored the Hirado port, whereas no similar ship came to his own harbor. One loses face when such things are known. His town's Bonzes were quick to foster this irritation of the Prince. Their proud, semimilitary nature was offended by the indifferent zeal of the Western missionary, mounting, in their eyes, to the realm of impertinence.

Francis' experience with various forms of opposition, and it was a wide one over many years, warned him that the time had come when he and his associates had worn out the initial welcome. The day was approaching when they would be more prudent, and safer, in turning northward. Nor was the prospect displeasing.

In the south, he knew he had made an impression. His learning, his reputation, his sincerity — all appealed to the analytical mind

of the educated Japanese. While in Hirado he had done some preaching, and his presentation of Christianity had awakened an interest which would, he hoped, result in further success for other missionaries. Before he went on to the principal island of Honshu he would leave, as the event proved, De Torres at work in Hirado.

But now, in the summer of 1550, the Daimyo of Kagoshima issued an edict forbidding the preaching of Christianity. One did not argue with such an ukase. All preachers of Francis' faith became liable to death. Evidently the time had come to move onward and northward, to seek out the Emperor. Francis knew the directive was issued primarily against himself. He, being leader of the missionaries, must leave. Paul Yajiro would be left to keep the Christian instruction progressing.

After Francis' departure from Kagoshima, Yajiro proved unequal to the role, because of temperament and the Bonzes' opposition. Before six months had passed he left Japan for China, where he undertook the role of river pirate, and his death occurred in China. Fortunately for Francis' peace of mind, he never learned of Yajiro's defection.

Xavier's converts, however, had been so well trained in the rudiments of faith that they remained fervent Christians. Almeida, coming into their midst eleven years afterward, found them carefully following Francis' instructions. These Christians proudly exhibited to the famous Jesuit lay Brother and "best physician in Japan," the parting gift left them by Francis. This was a collection of prayers, written in the saint's own hand, and tied up in small packets with a picture of the Annunciation.

"Once a week," one of their number told Almeida, "I call them all together so that they might in penitential spirit use the discipline."

The Jesuit missionaries reached Hirado by ship. The Daimyo of Hirado, perhaps recalling his enmity with the Daimyo of the city they had left, treated them with welcoming courtesy. He was, Francis knew, little more than a thieving prince but at least the Jesuits could welcome and accept his permission to evangelize within his realm. More converts were made in a relatively few weeks than had been won in Kagoshima in almost a year of work.

Xavier had in his hands his carefully written Japanese version of Catholic doctrine. Its impact and effect upon all listeners was immediate and rewarding.

Satisfying as this was, Francis' objective was to reach the Emperor. He would go by way of Yamaguchi, second most important city of Japan. Father de Torres would be left at Hirado to advance the infant Church in that city.

Francis' subsequent quest of the Emperor is the story of a journey heroic in missionary annals. Bitter wintry cold punished the missionaries' bodies and the scornful mockery of insulting Japanese made the trip the most bitter of Francis' career. The difficulties of the journey are reflected in the words of Allesandro Valignani, noted organizer of early Christianity in the Japanese isles:

“To journey in this way into the center of Japan, clothed in a fashion both novel and strange, to move through the paganism of the Japanese with no leader or hope except God, this was an undertaking of exceptional bravery.”

Francis left Hirado in company with Brother Fernandes, who alone of the Jesuits knew Japanese fluently, and two native catechists, Matthew and Bernard. The painful trip to Yamaguchi was a matter of five hundred miles. By walking the long roads, by bouncing forward in Japanese carts on rutted highways, and by some sea stages, the little group advanced. Besides some gifts, they carried a few belongings, which consisted of two pouches containing a surplice, a few shirts, and a frayed blanket. “The blanket,” Fernandes wrote, “is to keep us warm at night because Japanese taverns boast of no beds.”

There is something reminiscent of the Bethlehem story in the missionaries' attempts to find lodgings. More often than not the innkeepers sent them away with insulting words. Knowing that they might be refused admittance to the inns, the native convert Bernard carried a small supply of cooked rice suspended from his girdle. This, at least, would allay their hunger when food would not be given them. There was little, however, to allay the hurt they experienced inwardly when, in certain towns and villages, they were the target for flung stones.

“Even the children,” Francis said, in what some consider the

most pathetic sentence he ever wrote, "chase after us with cries of scorn."

But children or adults, it matters not very much. To Francis' burning desire to win souls among this self-revealing people, all the Japanese were basically the children of God. Some he had already gathered into his apostolic net. Many would have no word from him nor would want any part of his teaching. Francis knew that he and Fernandes were among the first, perhaps even the first, white men to enter these areas.

The little party reached Yamaguchi as winter ushered in its snowy months. The natives gazed at them with wonder, interest, and a growing spirit among many which inclined them to make sport of the strangers, creatures with odd clothes, fair skin, and round, not slanting, eyes, which made them appear continually surprised. Francis smiled back into the curious faces. Inwardly he breathed quick and imperative prayers to the good God who simply *must* let His work prosper in this important city of Japan.

The reception in Yamaguchi was, at best, a mixed one. The Governor of the city was favorable. Francis presented himself to the ruler as Portuguese ambassador from great and distant Goa. A high psychological moment came in his presentation to the Governor of a clock and other gifts indicating friendliness. The Japanese records of the presentation mention the clock which "struck exactly twelve times by day and twelve by night." Francis also gave the Governor "glasses for the eyes, with whose help an old man might see as clearly as if he were in youth." The records do not indicate whether the glasses proved good or bad for the gentleman's eyesight. But liberty to preach was granted and placards appeared in the city, announcing such permission. Japanese folk, moreover, who desired to, might be converted.

Many listened. Many others mocked and jeered. But, and this was the desirable end, a handful of natives was received into the Church.

The questions thrown at the missionary were multiplied. How can you reconcile your Creation philosophy with the Buddhist belief in impersonal absorptions and the re-emanations of the All? How can the future life be accommodated, in your religion,

with the doctrines of Shinto? Is ancestor worship to be reckoned harmful? Francis' decision to borrow and wear rich stoles and Japanese sandals, for discussions with Bonzes and certain more learned men, was approved but very secondary to the explanations of his beliefs.

Nerves can be stretched to near breaking point under circumstances such as those encountered daily by Francis and Juan Fernandes. It is not easy to know one preaches the religion of the Son of God and meet with the casual interest and indifferent attention shown by people who "might become Christians if you can make us believe your religion is better than our own."

Invitations were forthcoming to visit the homes of the *samurai* and *kugi*, the leading military men and members of the nobility. Francis maintained composure while knowing that certain invitations aimed at little more than "entertainment" by himself and Juan, a hope that the guests of the housemasters would be diverted for a time by these odd itinerant preachers of strange religion. When insults became too much, Francis reddened.

"So be it," he murmured to Fernandes. "Give it back to them, as good as they send."

The advice warms us who read of it. A man can take just so much. Then, with weapons of wit and logical thrust, he may parry both insult and criticism. Juan paled at the advice but carried it out. Francis' directions were always right. Besides, Father Francis must believe that the two Jesuits would fare better by handling themselves in evident fearless fashion.

"But every time I turned back our answer against these Japanese princes," Brother Fernandes said later, "handling them in the manner indicated by the priest, I shook with growing fear. I half expected to be given in reply for my efforts a swift thrust of a sword, one quite able to whisk my head from my shoulders."

Fernandes had been a wealthy silk merchant in Spain in earlier years. Ordinarily he was quite composed. In the hostile surroundings of the *samurai* courts his fear of imminent death was difficult to control. "However," he tells us with grim understanding, "Father Francis kept informing me, 'You really should control your fear of death more than anything else; remember, by despising death

we will prove ourselves the betters of these proud people.' "

This independence of attitude was, on Francis' advice, carried within the walls of the palace of the Daimyo himself. Deference and gracious politeness, of course, but withal a calm demeanor, proper to emissaries of the King of heaven, the Lord Almighty. The Prince, Yoshitaka, was surrounded by a court made up of all the artistic culture of the land but beneath the surface, as the missionaries knew, there was much that was evil.

"What is this law you bring the Japanese?"

The Prince's question was a challenge at once forthright and sincere. Francis signaled Brother Juan to take over the situation. Juan started to read carefully and with feeling from his copybook: the history of Creation, the story of the Garden of Eden, the first or original sin, the precepts of the Decalogue, and the punishment the Lord reserved for unrepentant sinners.

Juan paused in his reading before the Prince and nobles. His face paled and his eyes turned to Francis, standing serenely a few feet from him. Francis nodded with understanding. He knew that there followed immediately in the text a strong denunciation, written by himself, of the unnatural sins and worst vices practiced by not only the nobles but by the Daimyo himself. It was a moment no true missionary could in conscience avoid or try to dodge. Francis' mind raced with his thoughts. Men addicted to unnatural vice were described in his text, now in Juan's trembling fingers, as "more filthy than swine, more base than dogs and other brute animals."

The delay had been momentary. Francis directed Juan to resume his reading. The Brother swallowed hard, then went on with the words of the text. His ears waited for the swishing sound of the Japanese sword which would make of the text he read the swan song of both Jesuits. The Prince listened, scarcely breathing, and the casual smirk on the faces of his nobles dissolved into lines of anger. The reading continued. Without seeming to, Francis saw the knuckles of the Governor's hand, holding the ornamental fan, whiten as the man's fingers tightened upon the ivory handle. Finally Juan finished, then raised his eyes, now filled with relief that the recital of the sins was completed.

Francis still stood, smiling slightly at the seated Prince. The ruler's eyes were cast down as if he were lost in thought. No disturbance marked his face. His retainers, taking their cue from the untroubled face, relaxed.

“That, sire,” Francis said evenly in quiet tones, “is perhaps the answer to your question about the law we bring the Japanese.”

The Oriental head lifted. Francis read the approval, the tribute to his courage, in the narrow eyes.

“It is most interesting,” the Daimyo said slowly. His eyes were upon the priest's face but the nodding head including the standing nobles. “We will speak of this further at another time.”

The “audience” was completed. The Jesuits, after the usual exchange of vows, retired from the court. Behind them, hanging in the air of the large room of the Governor, hung the echoes of the words which the Japanese could not but esteem as a manifestation of outstanding courage.

Francis and his perspiring companion moved through the streets. St. Paul, having once harangued the “intelligentsia” of Athens and been informed that the Athenian leaders would hear more of his strange preaching later, would have understood the mixed feelings with which the missionaries left their meeting with the Daimyo.

Like Paul they hung their hopes upon success in the market place. At least there they would preach to the masses. Rank, as such, meant little or nothing to a missionary who had lightly laughed at his own family patent scroll of nobility.

How much warmth touched Francis' heart, in that cold winter of discontent of 1550-1551, is debatable. The season of Christmas came on and Francis was regretfully learning there would be little room for the Christ in the inns and hearts of the Japanese. Doggedly he continued to speak to the people, to the crowds in the streets and squares of Yamaguchi. The fifty thousand people of the city, or most of them, heard his exhortation. But converts were few and far between.

“Come into our houses,” some members of nobility urged, time and again, “and we will consider this way of life you preach. We would hear more of it.”

The three missionaries sighed. Too often the invitation had been accepted in the past and the results were niggardly. However, one never knew; for the conversion of only one family, much would willingly be endured.

"Ha!" laughed the idlers beside the street bazaars. "Look at the new Bonzes who want us to worship one God and to have only one wife!"

Francis hated to surrender the idea of the conversion of these people. His experienced eye and the judgment of his trained mind insisted that, once he won converts in Japan, these new Christians would be his until their death. As the event proved, he was correct. His converts were relatively few in the island empire, but they carried on even to martyrdom when the gage was thrown down in persecutions to follow. Francis never hesitated to label his Japanese converts as the most steadfast fruits of his harvesting. In this the historian weighs the question: was there something basically akin between the nature of the Japanese character and that of the lordly professor turned priest and missionary, some bond which Francis sensed, however dimly? The student of his life recalls Ignatius' dictum: Of all his sons, Francis Xavier had been the most difficult to "reach," but once won, Xavier was his most steadfast and treasured son. Francis, in turn, found in Japan the hardest of nuts to crack, the Japanese character almost impervious to change, but being won, utterly unswerving in devotion and allegiance.

However this may appear after the event, the month of December, 1550 brought Francis' decision. "We must leave this place," he told his companions. "Our only hope is to find the Emperor. If he helps, there is hope for widespread conversions. If not, we will at least have done our utmost."

The journey to Kyoto (then called Miyako) was a repetition of other wintry buffetings against snow and sea storms. With but little rice for sustenance in their wallets, the three men rubbed elbows with complete poverty. A thousand crowns Francis had possessed had long since been distributed among impoverished Japanese converts. The journey, in part, took them along roads and over hills bordering the Inland Sea. The country was largely

in a state of warfare and the roads connecting districts were providing a holiday from restraint by authority. The local brigands were doing fine business, preying on all unsuspecting and unarmed travelers. Bernard, the guide who had an easy facility for losing the way, scanned every horizon. Perhaps robbers would bring the mission enterprise to a dismal and colorless end before the sacred city of Kyoto was reached. One could but pray.

The account given by Fernandes of the three hundred miles of land and water travel throws Francis into sharp relief.

“Frequently the snow reached our knees, and higher. A stranger on the way asked us, ‘If you’re coming from the abode of the gods [India], why haven’t you directed the gods above to cease hurling such quantities of snow upon this land?’ When night fell, the cold was so intense and permeating that Father Francis put over the two of us the rough matting which was supposed to be our bed. It didn’t keep us from remaining almost frozen. Then there were the rivers to cross! Ice water up to our waists. Nevertheless, Father Francis through all of this walked without even shoes, until we came to a harbor whence we boarded ship for Sakai.

“All night and day we were squatting on the deck. The sailors about us insulted us with their language. One of them, discovering Father Francis occupying the sailor’s place, grew noisily indignant, and heaped upon the priest all types of abuse.

“But Francis did not answer the fellow. Rather, he gazed at him with sadness. Thereupon another rough sailor developed the practice of baiting the Father, ridiculing him as if he were a fool, or even an animal. Once, with great kindness and withal a sadness in his face, Father Francis said to the sailor: ‘How is it you talk to me this way? Don’t you understand that I would rejoice to explain the way of salvation to you, for I love you very much?’ However, the fellow could not comprehend what the priest was trying to tell him.”

We are reviled and we bless. We are persecuted and we suffer it. The simple statement, penned long ago to early Christians in Corinth, could well have fallen from the lips of these sixteenth-century messengers of the same Gospel.

It was trouble afloat and trouble on land. In two districts,

where Francis spoke openly against the vices of the Japanese evildoers, he narrowly avoided being stoned. On another occasion he decided the group had best join a party on horseback in order to be safe against brigands in the hills. Twice on this particular trip he was wounded by the arrows of thieves. His companions record that on such unwelcome occasions Francis merely recited verses from the Psalms appropriate to the moment.

In Sakai the poverty of the missionaries offended the Japanese. The harassed three were slowly learning that the people they sought to evangelize could not square the doctrine of the richness of heaven with the torn, ragged uniforms of the same heaven's professed ambassadors.

"The three missioners," Brother Fernandes declared, "had a poor welcome. No one wished to provide lodgings for them, and along their way the people continually made sport of them with insult and mockery. It proved so miserable that the men sought shelter in a pine woods near the city. There, beneath a tree, they erected a cabin from branches they found lying on the ground. Their peace was short-lived, because the groups of the children found them out, coming to gawk at the foreigners, and pelt them with taunts accompanied by stones."

Somehow they pushed forward, footsore and weary, and with disappointment in their minds. Perhaps at Kyoto their fortunes would change.

"Surely," Francis observed dryly to his exhausted companions, "they cannot grow any worse."

• [Chapter 18] •

CONCLUSION OF THE JAPANESE MISSION

His fellow Catholics of later centuries are accustomed to seeing Francis Xavier dressed in his long flowing soutane, the fingers of his right hand gripping the handle of a staff and his left hand carrying the broad-brimmed black hat. It might be that Francis, given the choice, might prefer the picture of himself as he appeared to the Japanese. They saw him in wide figured stoles, which hid most of his cassock, Japanese sandals upon his feet, and in the fingers of his right hand the native parasol. This last, which in summer or winter was frequently in his hand, was a symbol, a manifest telling others that he wished to be one with them.

Unfortunately, the majority of them refused to be one with him. But those converts he did make were reward for the trip to the isles of Japan.

The natives of Japan and of the China he tried unsuccessfully to reach were his highest objective in the East. In India and the scattered southern islands, he first had to overcome the obstacle of a weakened, if not perverted Christianity. Europeans, especially the Portuguese, had broken down much of the respect for the Faith originally held by the first native Christians. In Japan and China, however, there was forthright paganism. There was no corrupted or polluted Christianity to contend with.

When Francis left Japan, he left two groups behind him. One was the vast unconverted Japanese population. The other group, however, was the planting of the seeds of lasting faith and Chris-

tianity in the isles. They numbered some 1500 to 2000 souls, blessed with the grace of conversion and washed with baptismal waters. This infant Church would write, during the following century, one of the most glorious pages in the annals of Christian martyrdom.

Whether Divine Providence gave Xavier a vision into the future of the Faith in Japan or any inkling of its crucified martyrs, we do not know.

Certainly the promise of permanent planting of the Catholic religion seemed dim and remote when Francis reached Kyoto. The large city had been devastated shortly before by fire and the havoc wrought by civil warfare. The sovereign and his scattered viceroys could agree, seemingly, upon nothing. The result was painful and costly and lives were lost in the civil wrangling.

The eleven days following Francis' arrival in Kyoto were days that shook the already fragile world of his dreams of mission success.

They were eleven days of unsuccessful attempts to have personal audience with the Emperor. This frightened gentleman was granting no audience. He mistrusted, in his fallen and abject state, his fellow countrymen. Like many rulers he had reached that hour when a man's worst enemies are those of his own household. To admit foreigners now? Spies or agents of enemy lords, perhaps? To be knifed by treacherous hands, after having opened the door himself to the assassins? No. It was unthinkable.

"It may not be that, your highness," he was told by one of his last faithful retainers within the modest palace. "These men profess to come as representatives of the government officials in India, the Portuguese."

"Words," muttered the Emperor with annoyance.

"Their embassy, they say, is not political, nor military. It is something to do with the preaching of a religion."

The Emperor pondered the situation. He shrugged at length. "Religions from afar I am not interested in. But perhaps," he continued with a new gleam in his eye, "they might bring me presents? Gifts? Gifts might mean money for arms."

His subordinate shook his head. "No, Highness, their leader says they bring no presents. It was, he declares, difficult enough to get himself here without trying to carry presents at this time."

The wave of the Emperor's hand was definite, final. "Tell him I will not see him. Tell him to go away — and that the Emperor is not one to change his mind once he has come to a decision."

It was a gesture, a wave of a hand by an earthly prince which dismissed Xavier, his companions, their guardian angels, and the already crumbling hopes for a national conversion to the faith of Christ. The official brought the imperial answer back to Francis and Bernard, who waited hopefully in one of the courts of the sprawling palace of the Mikado.

For a few moments Francis, upon hearing the decision, said nothing. Bernard, watching his leader closely, knew he looked upon a man with extraordinary self-control. He recalled how this priest, arriving in Kyoto with high expectations, laughed and tossed an apple up and down in the air in the exuberance of his spirits upon arriving at the long-sought goal. Now Father Francis had been visited with defeat, with bitter disappointment. The heavily lined face seemed to mirror both inward sorrow and resignation. No word of protest passed the priest's lips.

"Perhaps later, indeed," Bernard said softly, hopefully. "He may change his mind."

Francis turned weary eyes upon his affectionate companion. He managed a smile, weak but reassuring. "Perhaps," he said slowly. "But, I do not think so, Brother Bernard. I fear it will not be so." He bowed to the Emperor's messenger, then turned away. "Come, Bernard," he said quietly. "We must go."

He might well have known that it was time to go. Francis was never a man to delay unnecessarily nor waste time. The Emperor had refused him admittance. In this land of proud feeling, a country where one does not expect one of nobility to change his mind lightly, it was probable now that they would not see the Mikado. One could remain for a few days. . . .

After eleven days Francis acknowledged defeat. God's good purposes were often mysterious in the manner of their realization. So be it. One does one's best, then leaves the rest to God. A return trip to the palace, accompanied by derisive children who pelted him with stones, brought no success to the priest. Attempts to preach in the streets proved useless, for the people were pre-

occupied with their own preparations for safety in the face of further fighting, already threatening.

"Alas, Brother Bernard, we cannot say with heart that it is good for us to be here. The words do not apply, at least not at this time. We must return to Yamaguchi. Perhaps we can seek influence there."

The Daimyo of Yamaguchi was evidently the strongest ruler in Japan. Fifteen fifty-one was a year in which Japanese potentates could spend no time dreaming within, or of, marble halls. It was a period of unrest and mutual suspicion. Francis Xavier was weary with the increased difficulties set in his path by warring princelings. Well, back to Yamaguchi by way of Hirado. Perhaps some sort of edict or protective document or letters patent might be wrested from the Yamaguchi ruler. By this time Francis was not quite sure what his beleaguered self should seek. Let Providence dispose of him and this present mission, already etching lines of exhaustion on his narrow face.

The traveling began, the same grinding routine of bad roads and rough wintry seas.

Brother Fernandes, blessed with the patient devotion of a devoted hound, later set down his account with faithful pen: "If the earlier travel, en route from Hirado to Yamaguchi and Kyoto, was a painful business with its rotten roads and all sorts of suffering, the trip back was far worse. February was with us with its biting cold and its wind and snow. Father Francis gave some few coins at hostelrys in order to get some dried fruits for us. Some of this food, resting in his pockets or the sleeve of his gown, he would hand to little boys we met, giving both the fruit and his blessing."

Fernandes' record tells the dull history of a going and a return involving more than four months' journeying. Francis, more often than not, "went on foot, often without shoes on his feet."

In the story of the priest's years in Japan, with their successive months of rebuff and — to his missionary heart — anguish of soul, Xavier's humility shines with clearer light. Selflessness marked every step of his way. The deep-set trust in his Lord flowered

in outward serenity. Perhaps his Master let him suffer in expiation for his sins, past and present.

Perhaps, too, Francis' memory still retained his own words of warning sent in November to the brethren in India. Their tenor suggests that he was not unaware of the danger of false pride, not unmindful of an earlier apostle who dreaded to become a castaway himself after exhorting others to virtue.

"There are numerous souls lost in hell," wrote the saint, "souls who guided others to paradise, but thereafter fallen, puffed up with mistaken belief in their own righteousness. On the other hand, hell contains no one who, weighted with earthly suffering, strengthened his own soul with sentiments of humility."

It would be an underestimating of Francis to believe that the "earthly sufferings" he experienced in Japan destroyed his faith in the conversion of the natives or depressed him to the point of despair. Difficulties abounded. Conversions were few. But a foothold had been made in this island stronghold of paganism. Circumstances would take Francis away from these islands, but he would leave with high hopes for the growth of the few seeds he had planted. Excerpts from his own letters, to Ignatius and others, leave little room for doubt about this.

"Following successive days of answering endless questions the Christians were baptized. . . . Two months in this particular area, and I have baptized some five hundred people, some of them among the upper classes. . . . These people with whom we have been working are the best one could find; I, for one, think no race better than the Japanese could be found among the infidels. . . . Our new Christians are remarkably friendly, forever coming to visit with us, wishing to serve and help us. . . . The people of Japan are a people who can be converted by both love and logic."

Francis' opinions, reflected in such words, did not change. Returning from the futile attempt to converse with the Mikado, his quick intelligence grasped two facts. First, the present moment was about the worst time he might have chosen to enter Japan upon missionary enterprise because of the country's internal strife.

Second, his study of the Japanese and the great wall of oriental opposition to Christianity would necessitate the efforts, not of one or two itinerant priests, but of a well-organized and numerous band of Catholic missionaries. Meantime he would work further himself but the visit in these islands could not be a lengthy one such as he had envisioned upon leaving India.

His reflections seemed to hearten him. The long-range vision satisfied something deeply apostolic in his soul ever hungry for more conquest of souls. The dream was not shattered. Rather it changed, its features reflecting an altered purposing of long-measured harvesting.

The months remaining between February and mid-November, when he sailed for India, were months of steady labor. The joy of Father de Torres, upon his leader's return from the capital, knew no bounds. The good priest, waiting anxiously in Firando, seems to have believed that his superior was a likely subject for whatever more exquisite tortures the Japanese rulers reserved for "holy men" who came with criticism, both explicit and implicit, of native beliefs and especially native morals.

When Francis had reassured De Torres that he was definitely not a ghost, despite his lean appearance, he discussed the immediate Christian progress in Firando. Thereafter, one can well believe, the leader indicated his growing objective: the conversion of the land of China as the most prudent and practical step forward in looking to the ultimate conversion of Japan. The thought was growing in his mind with each passing day.

"The people of Japan," Francis has declared, "esteem the men of China as brilliant, not only with regard to right living and the afterlife but also with regard to the proper organization of society in this world. That's why they continually ask us about the law of God, the original creation of this world. How, they question us, if creation was as we describe it to have been, how is it that the Chinese seem not to have known of it?"

All that was worth while in Japanese culture was ultimately derived from the Chinese. Literature, art, ways of thought, architecture, and all phases of civilization in the Japanese isles were believed, and with much cause, to have emanated during past

centuries from the vast reaches of China. It would not be good reasoning, nor good manners, to accept a new religion if indeed the "great ones" of China did not express approval of it.

The picture of one man planning the conversion of a mighty vastness such as China, in order to facilitate the conversion of the millions of another nation, is something to conjure with. Whatever has been said, during and after his own time, about Xavier's zeal embracing a world, takes added color from his conversion-of-China project. And the seeming ease with which he conceived his plan. It is as if today some member of a missionary congregation casually announced in our hearing, "I think that I'll excuse myself now, because I'm going off to convert Africa."

To a mind like Xavier's, however, there was never anything debatable about the dictum concerning the shortening of the arm of the Lord. He *knew* God desired the conversion of *all* men. In his educated mind dwelt the thought, later well expressed by Tennyson: "Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs." To Xavier that purpose was the salvific will of the Creator. All men were destined to share in the fruits of redemption. He, and all missionaries, labored to bring human souls to that fruition.

Following his return visit to Yamaguchi, Francis would leave Japan for India. To believe that he considered the Japanese mission anything less than a challenge to be met by further evangelization would do him an injustice. More Jesuits would carry on the work he had begun. It was actually after he had left Japan that he wrote—in January, 1552—to Ignatius, outlining the prospect facing other Ignatian sons when they reached the island empire.

"When the Fathers of our Society get to Japan, their troubles will be much greater than expected. All day and night they will be met with visits and inquiries. Invitations will be received to homes of nobility, and they cannot refuse such. Time will be wanting in which to pray or meditate or contemplate or relish internal recollection. When they start out, time will be unavailable even for offering Mass. They'll be so busy, in fact, wrestling with questions, that they won't even have time for their recitation of Office, for needed meals and sleeping."

Such was the implicit invitation to his European brethren. They hearkened to it, despite its fraternal warnings. Francis counted upon the spirit of the sons of the same father, and his trust was not misplaced. The missionaries came.

In Yamaguchi Francis sought out the ruler, Oxindono. This Prince was the strongest of all Japanese overlords. Twenty provinces were beneath his control. To Oxindono Francis made a present of certain gifts, originally intended for the Mikado, but left behind when the missioners set out for Kyoto because of the difficult circumstances of travel. The mirrors, crystal goblets, striking clock, all made a favorable impression upon the Viceroy. Certainly this holy man must be of exquisite culture, for his gifts, as do those of every man, reflect his character. Those whom the Father represented (the Portuguese Viceroy and the Governor of Malacca) must, likewise, be estimable gentlemen.

"What then, might we do for the Father in return?"

Francis must have suppressed a smile, recalling the difference between this reception and interest and that dismal rebuff in the northern Kyoto. He bowed graciously when the Prince offered a present of money. No, it was not money he sought.

"But this is surprising," the Japanese exclaimed, "for, if I might be forgiven for mentioning it, my experience with other holy men, our own Bonzes I might say, made me to believe that money was welcome to men of religion. Surely your disinterest in such a gift is refreshing."

Refreshing or not, Francis saw his opportunity was at hand. "Rather, Highness, I humbly seek your permission and approval for further preaching of the message, the Gospel of Christ, the Lord of our Faith, here again in Yamaguchi."

Not only in Yamaguchi but in nearby districts the permission was readily granted. A former residence of certain Bonzes was given the missionaries for their dwelling place. Later, upon the ground surrounding it, Father de Torres would build a church.

The work of evangelizing moved forward. Francis' grasp of the Japanese language was still quite incomplete. His fumbleings with niceties of grammar frequently convulsed his hearers, but the priest's disposition to be the first to smile at his lapses won

his audiences. The natives declared that they were impressed chiefly by Xavier's manner of life and quality of personal character, so different from the lordly Bonzes so long in possession in the realm of religion.

There is (the Japanese acknowledged first to each other, then to Francis) a beauty in a religion whose fruit is the modesty and purity and intellectual honesty so evident in the Christian missionaries.

Conversion continued. Most striking, if not most important, was one due to the masterful self-conquest of Brother Fernandes. During one of his sermons, a mocking listener spat full in his face. There followed a startled moment of shocking silence. All eyes studied the Brother, standing silent, gazing into the insolent face of the man before him. Then, wiping his soiled face, Brother Fernandes resumed his discourse as if he had paused simply to further gather his thoughts. The reaction was powerful, and fruitful in winning friends to the religious preacher.

One man of learning was so impressed by the event that he sought baptism. This conversion was "newsworthy" because of the convert's previous antagonism to the new religion. Others, influenced by his acceptance of Christianity, followed his example. Notable among them was a young man and almost blind "genius." His name was Lawrence and his nickname "the squint-eyed." Later he entered the Jesuit Order as a Brother, and for almost thirty years he labored in the Japanese states, winning many of his countrymen to the true Faith.

Meantime, while Francis and his companions continued their preaching and baptizing, the populace noted the conversion of numerous Bonzes. "Soon," the Christians observed, "there will be no more pagan idolaters in Yamaguchi if this keeps up."

Francis professed, at this time, to be in splendid physical condition. It may be that his warm welcome in Yamaguchi and its neighboring districts prompted his statement. His associates, however, shook their heads. The Father's hair was now white, his body seemed thinner than before, and the lines were deepening in his face. The round of the priest's preaching, baptizing, nursing of the sick and the dying, and instructing of neophytes was an

around-the-clock program. Francis might not have suspected it but the drain of this Japanese mission upon his health was hastening the day when his tired body could do no more. It was later than he thought. But the work went on unabated in zeal and intensity.

"If only I could do more with the prince Oxindono," he told his co-workers, "we would be more satisfied. He is friendly, yes. But I make no headway against the man's vices and evil passions."

The Japanese mission had consumed some two years already. Francis understood best that there were many indeed against whose evil passions his words would be ineffectual. So be it. As for himself, he followed the practice of frequently renewing his religious vows, finding in the renewal resources of inward strength. In a land marked by cultivation of vice he must walk the pathway of innocence.

The difficulties of the mission were not lightened by his recollection of the troubles left behind at Goa. How was Gomes faring, after Francis' many exhortations? he wondered. He hoped that he would find upon his return that all had gone well. "Nevertheless, there has weighed upon me all through these months in Japan the deep concern I have in the matter." Added to his worry about Indian affairs, there was the long period in which no letters arrived from his beloved Ignatius.

But meantime, there was no lack of matters at hand. The questions were thrown continuously at the missionaries and they were answered. Francis' experience as university professor gave him easy facility in meeting the thrusts. "What does your God make the soul from? Has it a size, a hue, a shape? How can the soul, departing from the flesh, behold God? Why can't we see, using our souls, God at this time? If the soul is truly distinct from the body, does it not become a part of God Himself? What do you say to reconcile the terrible evil men do with the holiness of your God? Should not our journeying to heaven be easier if God wishes all men to reach their heavenly home? Suppose a man never had an opportunity to learn anything of God, what is to happen to him?"

And so on and on the questions ran.

Brother Fernandes (bless him for the careful accounts he kept!) tells of the pleasure the responses gave the questioners. "Our answers seemed to fill them with joy. We are reckoned, moreover, as the most learned men. This is of immense advantage to us."

Slowly, in many minds, the basic Buddhist doctrine, that all is illusion or negation, began to fade. It was replaced by the saint's warmly welcomed positive concepts of God and Creation, the immortality and individuality of the soul, the complementary union of body and soul, and the fatherhood of the God who loved all of His children, and who sent His beloved Son to redeem men from evil. A curtain lifted in many minds, and love sprang upward in many hearts. Five hundred converts clustered about their new father in God.

Understandably, these Christians were saddened at the thought of Francis' departure from Japanese shores. The priest, however, had determined his course. His return to India must be undertaken, following a visit to the province of Bungo, whose Daimyo had invited him for a visit. Then, to India — and, please God, after that to China. China had been forbidden to foreigners. Would it be possible to enter its portals? One could try.

News had reached Yamaguchi of a Portuguese ship's coming to Funai (today's Oita). Funai was capital of the province of Bungo on the island of Kyushu. Strangely enough, the ship's captain had elaborated upon the merits and achievements of Xavier when conversing with the Daimyo of Bungo. The latter, a strong and altogether individualistic prince, sent word to Francis, inviting him to Bungo. Francis would go to visit this prince. Tales told of him depicted the man as given to temperamental outbursts, as one quick to kill, and quick to forgive. Withal, the sort of person whom Francis preferred to seek out and win to the Faith.

To Father de Torres and Brother Fernandes he committed the flock of Japanese converts. The time had arrived for Francis to leave them. The farewells were brief and touching. A sermon given to all, an exchange of fraternal embrace, a final blessing — and Xavier was gone.

On foot, he proceeded northward accompanied by two catechists and two nobles. The latter pair were having an opportunity to

exercise a spirit of poverty inasmuch as their property had been confiscated upon their conversion. Francis' pleasure mounted as the little group neared Bungo in northwest Kyushu. Edward da Gama, an old friend, he had learned, was captain of the recently arrived ship. Meeting old friends, so far from India, was something to lift the heart. Best of all, two letters, brought by the ship, had already reached Francis.

They were letters from Ignatius. One, which arrived in India after his departure for Japan, directed his return to Rome for interviews and consultation with Loyola. The second, nullifying the first because of Xavier's importance in the East, contained news of Francis' appointment as Provincial of the new Province of the Indies. Besides Ignatius' letters, others were at hand from Goa. Francis' return was of utmost necessity — because of Gomes' increasing ability to disrupt the entire Jesuit community at Goa.

Francis decided to sail with Edward da Gama as soon as his seafaring friend was ready to depart.

Upon reaching their destination, the travelers were greeted with a salvo from the ship's cannon. Francis' heart, affectionate by nature, warmed as he realized the booming salute was for himself. He saw the captain and crew members advancing on shore with outstretched hands of welcome. Meantime the Daimyo, King Cipian, whose palace was near the ship landing, sent messengers to inquire the cause of the cannon's booming. Had pirates, never wanting along this coast, attacked the Portuguese? Da Gama laughed and explained the arrival of Xavier to the King's emissary. The messenger seemed immensely interested in viewing the poorly clad "holy man." He observed that the local Bonzes had spread the word that Francis was a man of evil, possessed of an evil spirit. Da Gama dismissed the charges.

"Inform the King that, when we proceed to visit with him, he will see for himself what manner of man is this celebrated priest."

When the moment came for the procession to the palace, Francis was persuaded by the Portuguese to dress for the occasion. Knowing his experience and poor receptions in the past because of the matter of seedy appearance, Francis did not need much convincing.

The faded and frayed soutane was replaced by a new cassock. Over it Francis wore a lace surplice and a stole of rich green velvet, its hanging panels joined by a gold clasp. Some thirty of his friends attended him, all wearing their best suits. Local slaves, hastily pressed into service, accompanied the procession, and Da Gama produced, seemingly from nowhere, a small local orchestra to attend the group with martial strains. To heighten the importance of his friend, Da Gama himself walked barefoot. The August sunshine was kept from the missionary's brow by a parasol held gracefully above his head by an attendant.

"This time," Francis had whispered grimly to his companions, "we will *not* forget to bring presents."

A member of the tiny cavalcade carried a large white satin bag, containing a book. One of the group carried a pair of new black slippers, of the sort worn only by important officials. A third bore a present which must have delighted the angels of heaven, a painting of the Virgin Mary carefully wrapped in a violet scarf. In a land where the parasol is almost a national emblem, one of the retinue held aloft the largest parasol obtainable.

The reception by the young ruler Cipian was perhaps the most gracious Francis experienced in Japan. It made up for the wearying coldness and indifferent treatment he had so often received from this or that little king.

"Sit beside myself," the ruler invited, "and I will listen with pleasure to all you can tell me of Christianity. I beg that you be not troubled by the outbursts of our Japanese Bonzes. Their very rage attests to the holiness of your own character. The Bonze who abused you to me recently — well, does it not indicate that such a one has more commerce with hell than with heaven itself?"

Francis could scarcely believe his ears. *This* was the welcome he had envisioned so often in the past but which was not forthcoming. Now, as the priest was about to take his leave of Japan, God placed in his path a native Japanese of influence who treated him as both brother and longed-for adviser.

"Of the Bonzes, Sire, I will have but little to say. Rather, let me speak with your highness, as you have suggested, of the truths of our holy religion."

Thus it began. The instruction lasted until the dinner hour. Then, with the Portuguese companions and Japanese courtiers sitting about, the priest shared the royal dinner. Upon leaving the court, Francis bore with him full permission to preach Christ in the Bungo province. Edicts will be issued, the King informed him, announcing this permission. Other directives will go forth to curb abuses and improve public morality. Francis will be invited moreover, to give further lectures, and will be so kind as to dip into subjects of scientific nature.

The work began in the days that followed. Captain da Gama brushed aside Francis' protestations of deep gratitude. "It is for this, my Father, that you have come here from our Europe, is it not? And should I not do what I can to assist such a work?"

The teaching and preaching moved forward. Baptisms were the fruit of Francis' stirring exhortations and instructions. Word, meanwhile, came from Yamaguchi. Oxindono was dead, the result of a revolution led by an opposing Daimyo. The defeated ruler had committed suicide, after killing both wife and son, and setting fire to his own palace. The Christians, led by De Torres and Fernandes, feared for their lives for a time. Xavier quickly sought and received assurance from the new Daimyo that the Christians would not be molested. Furthermore, they would be under the protection of the new ruler.

In Bungo when a celebrated Bonze entered the Church five hundred of his Japanese admirers sought baptism. The new Christians grew in number. Meanwhile Francis tried, but without success, to win Cipian himself to the Faith. Later, said the King. This "later" was to prove some thirty years after Francis' death. But, in a gesture of gratitude to the man who long since brought Christianity to his realm, Cipian took the name of Francis at baptism.

The time neared for the return to India. Francis saw his little flock steadily increasing. He had been successful in a series of debates, at times marked with undercurrents of bitterness, between himself and the Bonzes. The King himself had rejected the Bonzes' teaching that evil and poverty were necessarily identified. He suppressed, moreover, the common crime of infanticide and

abolished numerous pagan rituals. He attended Francis' debates with the Bonzes, and was not above rebuking the pagan priests, frequently subject to loss of temper, with the sharp admonition: "Stop barking like dogs!"

On November 20, 1551, Francis Xavier sailed from Japan. King Cipian, although unwilling to accept Christian baptism, sent a messenger to the Viceroy of Goa. A treaty must be undertaken with two purposes: alliance with the respected Portuguese, and a promise that more preachers of the Christian religion would be sent to Bungo.

Boarding ship with high heart, Francis was accompanied by two Christians of the military rank, Matthew and Bernard. These men would study that they might one day return as missionaries to their native land.

Two years and some months in the isles of Japan were ended. Some fifteen hundred, perhaps at most two thousand, souls were now the nucleus of a fervent Christianity. This, Francis' mind and heart cried out together, is but the beginning.

The shores of the Inland Sea faded from Xavier's vision. On the ship's sun-swept deck Francis knew a sense of satisfaction, of accomplishment. Numerically, the result of his labors was not great. But the first sowing had been completed. The good God would give the increase. So He had promised.

[Chapter 19]

THE LAST DAYS IN INDIA

If one believes with Hervey Allen that "the only time you really live fully is from thirty to sixty," Francis Xavier's years of fullest life were centered in the ones spent in the Indies, the Straits, and Japan. He was forty-five when setting forth upon the return trip from Japan to Goa. His hair was white now, despite his years. Nor had it grown so "in a single night." The exacting succession of mission toils and self-exhausting labors were consuming the energies of his body.

His mind seemed increasingly active in a reverse proportion. On the India-bound voyaging of November, 1551, Francis' thoughts dealt with practical plans for the Chinese mission. Attempt upon the closed empire would not be long distant. Inquiry had already been made respecting some differences between the Japanese and the Chinese languages.

"I will set forth my explanation of Christian doctrine," he will explain later to Ignatius, "in the Chinese characters. Thus I can make the Chinese understand me until such time as I have fluency in their language."

As his ship sailed on its southwesterly course, Francis' seafaring fortunes ran true to form. The vessel was nearly wrecked in heavy seas and storm. When all seemed lost, the saint cried out, "O Lord Jesus Christ, love of my heart! Protect us by the memory of the five wounds You suffered on the Cross!"

Almost immediately the ship came under control. But now

followed an incident which is mentioned in all the biographies of the saint.

While the rains and waves pounded the ship in the period of greatest danger, a small boat had been lowered over the side. The fifteen men in it were to untangle the toppled sails and ropes dragging behind the larger vessel. To insure the sailors' safety, the small craft was attached by lines to the ship. The tie lines were not strong enough. A walloping wave thrust broke them and the wind swept the boat swiftly away. Meantime the ship itself careened crazily, as sailors, laboring under Da Gama's shouted orders, struggled to bring it under control. The attempt was relatively successful. Thereupon Captain da Gama had to make that decision most dreaded by masters of ships and seacraft: for the safety of all aboard the ship must be kept on course, thus leaving the little boat, now out of sight, to its fate and the mercy of the God of all seas and seafarers.

A gloom settled upon the ship and those manning it. While the crew continued to wrestle with the sea's attack, Francis retired to his cabin. There he prayed. A Chinese sailor, stationed at his door to prevent the priest from being disturbed by worried seamen, probably understood as little of the power of Xavier's prayer as do the rest of us. One does not easily enter into the mind and heart of a Xavier at prayer.

When Francis emerged from his quarters, he showed an untroubled countenance. He sought out the captain. "Do not lament nor worry, Edward, about the sailors adrift in the small boat. In three days' time, you will see, the boat, like some lost daughter, will return safely to the mother ship."

Francis instructed that the ship's progress, already slowed by the storm, should be slowed further. The sails were shortened. And the prediction was fulfilled: the small boat returned, its rescued occupants as joyously surprised as were the ship's doubting Thomases. The latter were doubly amazed — as have been most men ever since — to learn the drifting sailors had beheld Father Francis guiding their boat, and heard his encouraging words. Two Moslems, among the fifteen rescued men, asked for baptism.

Had Francis' role been enacted by a heaven-sent angel? Or

was the episode an instance of that strange bilocation which is not unknown in the lives of some of God's saints? The matter remains an open question. But the incident seems not to have been questioned by successive generations of historians. Moreover, whether the castaway sailors saw an angel or Francis himself during their dangerous drifting hours, the conclusion would be the same. The missionary was one who enjoyed extraordinary favor with God.

Now the vessel reached the island, Sancian, since touched by historical immortality because of its visitation, particularly the second one, of the man Francis Xavier. Sancian (originally known as Chang Chwen) stood some six miles off the coast of the Chinese mainland, south and west of Hong Kong. At the time of Francis' arrival it was a large center for Portuguese traders and merchants, some resident on the island, others frequent but transient visitors. Francis was happy to find, upon arrival, a ship in harbor, the *Santa Cruz*, piloted by his old friend Diego Pereira. Da Gama's ship was to resume its voyage, headed for Siam. Pereira, however, was to sail through the South China Sea and eventually arrive at Malacca.

Would Don Diego be willing to take Francis as a passenger? He would be more than happy to have his friend aboard. Thus the next step of the journey was easily arranged. Francis' farewell with Da Gama and his ship's company was memorable in one regard. He informed the ship's pilot, Francisco d'Aguiar, that he would not die upon the sea itself. Recalling the episode of the drifting boat and its extraordinary return to safety, it is not surprising to learn that D'Aguiar henceforth never permitted himself to worry about storms or dangers at sea. Nor that he met death, when it came, upon dry land.

There was much for Francis and Diego to discuss as the *Santa Cruz* moved steadily southward through Chinese waters.

"Sancian might be a good stepping-off place for an entry into China," Francis suggested to his friend.

"It might." Pereira considered the idea. "It certainly isn't much of a place in itself. Right now it's what you might call a den

of thieves. The smugglers from the mainland sneak out to Sancian to deal with Portuguese traders. Riffraff, most of them. You *really* want to go to China itself?"

Francis laid a hand on his friend's arm. "There's no question about it, actually. I am going. It's rather a matter of deciding just how best to get in. Japan will never be evangelized until China accepts Christianity. That's the long and short of it, and it's up to me to work on that basis."

There was curiosity, not unmixed with amusement and wonder, in Diego's face. "And you, Father Francis, have plans for all this. No?"

"Oh, yes. Many plans. Many thoughts and ideas. The first thing to grasp is that the Chinese will accept on their shores no one unless he's an ambassador of some great foreign ruler. That's where you enter the picture."

"I do?"

Francis nodded. "You, my friend, must arrange to come back as a Portuguese ambassador, sent by the Viceroy of Goa. We will put gifts and presents in your hands for the Chinese Emperor. That, I can assure you, is most important. You will be bringing likewise the compliments of the great King of Portugal to the Emperor."

His listener's smile grew. "And you, Father Francis, just when do you step into the picture?"

The saint smiled in return. "That's easy to answer, Diego. I will come with you. Together we will see the Emperor. Or at least get from his palace a grant of permission to preach and teach and bring the Gospel to the people. We might even work in order to have revoked the laws they have now excluding all foreigners. I also have in mind the Portuguese prisoners, now locked up in the prison at Canton. Perhaps we could do something about them, too."

Pereira's eyes widened as he stood, marveling at the assurance of this strange priest-friend. "Yes," he said slowly, "I think *you* could do all of these things. Maybe no one else — but I do believe that you could succeed. I'll do whatever you suggest. What's

more, if you'll allow me, I'll pay for the costs of the expedition itself. It's all somewhat overwhelming, but somehow I believe you could succeed."

"There will be difficulties," the priest said after a pause. "This work for God will have its enemies. Right down the line from the devil himself."

"The devil? He won't dare to interfere!" Pereira dismissed the evil one with a wave of his hand.

"No," Francis said thoughtfully, "do not underestimate the devil. Nor the harm he can do. You will see."

What harm was to be done to the project was, mercifully, kept from the eyes of Xavier. Later he would experience it. Not now.

With Pereira willing to undertake the expense of the projected embassy, the Goa Viceroy would, so Francis believed, be willing to approve the venture and furnish the necessary letters and documents. Biographers of Francis attribute Pereira's ready willingness to the man's belief that the trip into China would open the way to much profitable trading for himself. It would be "worth it." It should be recalled that the merchant was primarily a businessman, one who was not likely, at least after second thought, to put down a great sum of money for a venture unless it promised a reasonable measure of success and profit. That the venture finally failed was due to neither a refusal of the Goa Viceroy to co-operate nor to weakness inherent in the plan itself.

Failure was to stem, when the embassy seemed on the edge of success, from a human, a personal factor. The person in question was an official at Malacca, its Commandant-elect (at the time of Francis' present arrival in Malacca) Alvaro d'Ataide.

At Malacca Francis found crowds of old friends and converts to welcome him. Heightening his joy was a reunion with his beloved Father Perez and, above all, a letter waiting for him from Ignatius. This letter does not survive, save for an expression it contained and which is now famous. It is found in Xavier's answering letter.

"Beloved Father," Francis replied, "in Malacca, upon return from Japan, I was given the letter your holy kindness sent to me. Our Lord God understands how much consolation there was for

me to learn of the well-being and continuance of your life, so dear to me. Among the many precious phrases and consolations in this letter, I pondered its final one: 'Completely yours, in the knowledge that I can never forget you, Ignatius.' As I read, my eyes filled with tears, even as they do now as I copy your words. Memory brings back the long ago, and I remember the surpassing love you had for me then, a love that still endures. It was to your prayers and intercession with God for me that I have owed my successful overcoming of dangers and obstacles in Japan."

So this precious letter runs on. One reads it with something akin to awe and reverence, understanding that it is the self-revelation of heart penned by one who deserves position among the great lovers of history. This tired missionary, still on fire with zeal for the salvation of souls, carries within his heart the image of the spiritual father who trained him and sent him forth. If other Jesuits in India and the East leaned upon his great strength, Francis himself relied upon the supporting prayers and affection of Ignatius to see him through all problems and adversity.

"Your love informs me," he concludes, "of your great desire to behold me once more ere life itself ends. God Himself knows well how such words of affection burn deeply into my own heart, and how the tears start whenever I turn to them."

Francis would not delay long in Malacca. Only long enough to acquaint Alvaro d'Ataide with the plan for China and speak with him of Francis' return trip which would come before many months passed. History knows it was a practical step to inform D'Ataide of the project. But it was impractical, perhaps, not to mention to the Commandant-elect that the venture envisioned Pereira as the one to be the ambassador.

D'Ataide was the brother of Peter da Silva, an old friend of Francis it will be recalled, and the one whose orders to the piratical ship captain had ensured Francis' safe arrival in Japan. The largeness of soul enjoyed by Peter seems not to have been enjoyed by his ambitious brother who would succeed him in office. Alvaro's approval of the Chinese undertaking would cool when he learned of Pereira's designation as Portuguese ambas-

sador. He would consider this a reflection upon his own ability and new position. Perhaps, old biographers suggest, Alvaro resented the loss of an opportunity for personal enrichment and advancement.

India beckoned. A quick arrangement was made for Francis to sail upon the *Gallega*, piloted by Pereira's brother Antonio. Diego himself was unable to sail to Goa. He gave Francis three thousand crowns with a view to the projected mission. Francis landed at Cochin on January 24, 1552. The journey from Japan to India had been swift, consuming only three months. Once again he set foot upon the sands of India.

The days spent in Cochin seem to have been a period of multiple activity. There appears from now on something not unlike a feverish impatience in Francis' work to clear up matters demanding his attention in both Cochin and Goa. The Chinese mission undertaking emerges more and more as the background of his thought and action.

Francis was delighted to find in Cochin at the time the new Governor of the Indies, the most powerful official in India. No need to wait to see him in his office in Goa. Dom Alonso de Noronha listened to Francis' outline for the Chinese mission with interest and approval. He nodded his understanding of Xavier's insistence upon the necessity of gifts and presents for winning favor with Oriental monarchs. He was pleased with Pereira's offer to finance the expedition when the time came, as well as with new opportunities for business and trade relations for the Portuguese. All of this promised well, especially since the Goanese officials would not be particularly upset if the project met obstacle or failure.

Francis' enthusiasm and pleasure reflected themselves in his conversation with all who came to visit with him. Meanwhile he was occupied with the correspondence to and from Europe. There was not very much time, for his ship's captain informed him of a quick sailing.

To his sorrow there were unpleasant matters touching upon the Society demanding his immediate attention. Francis was not, after all his experience, one to delay when further delay was

unprofitable. As a result he dismissed from the Society a priest and a lay Brother.

"It pains me so very much," he wrote to the gentle Paul of Camerino, "to be forced to take this step. My sorrow is greater because I gather that there may be others upsetting the workings of the mission. Only God understands what it costs me to write this to you. Arriving here I expected, or hoped, to find some solace for the many difficulties I've met with. Rather, I find more difficulties, heavy ones to disturb me, even lawsuits and strife. And all of this adds up to much disedification."

The "strife" evokes the matter of Francis' dealings with members of the Confraternity of Mercy in Cochin, and hastens the conclusion of the story of Father Antonio Gomes. The Confraternity frequently found high endorsement, for its works and the high character of its lay officers, in Francis' letters. He himself in Goa and elsewhere had taken many steps to advance the charitable and spiritual aims of the group. When the Jesuit Fathers established a College in Cochin, they opened it beside the Church of Our Lady. The church belonged to the Confraternity. Now, upon his return to Cochin, Francis learned of bitter feelings and a miserable situation, provoked by Father Gomes.

Gomes, an adept in abusing well-ordered situations, had outdone himself with regard to the Church of Our Lady. The Portuguese and other worthy businessmen of the Confraternity had loaned the church to the Jesuits for their use and direction. Father Gomes, during Francis' absence, converted the loan into an outright "gift."

The Rector of Goa had taken unfair advantage of his position and influence. When he had completely alienated the good will of faculty and student body of the Goa College, he had capped his efforts with this highhanded annexing of the Cochin church. Some Confraternity members spoke of legal action against the Jesuits.

Francis investigated swiftly. Gomes had used undue influence upon the civil administration, in the person of the Governor, and upon the ecclesiastical authority, in the person of Bishop

Albuquerque. When some Confraternity members understood that the civil and Church authority favored Gomes' position, they were willing to accept the situation as somehow just and for the best. Others, especially some of the organization's protesting officers, were thrown into jail by the Governor at Gomes' suggestion.

"All of this," Francis decided, "has gone far enough. In fact, entirely too far."

Two days after Francis arrived in Cochin, he summoned the city's Council, the officers — those not jailed — of the Confraternity of Mercy, the local vicar-general, and all local priests, to meet with him in the chief church of Cochin. Many minds wondered what the great priest would do. The new Provincial of the Indies did not leave them long in doubt. Francis stood awaiting them, holding in his hands the keys to the Church of Our Lady.

"The purpose of the Society of Jesus," he explained, "is to work for the good of souls. It has never been our aim to create contention among good people, especially in such a matter as this of the ownership of Our Lady's Church. The only result of such a strife, were it permitted to continue, would be to weaken the devotion we all have for the Mother of God. The 'gift' of the church to our Order has been a cause for bitterness among many. Let all witness, then, that in the name of our Society I here and now renounce any Order ownership of the church. In the name of all my brother Society members I crave the pardon and the indulgence of all Cochin for whatever scandal may have been given in this entire affair. And to you, representatives of the Congregation of Mercy, I herewith turn over these keys to Our Lady's Church."

Needless to say the bold, and yet prudent, stroke of diplomatic procedure startled all Francis' listeners. A bad situation had been cleanly and swiftly rectified. As so often happens, when good will is manifested, the gesture evoked good will in return. The Confraternity shortly thereafter made over the Church of Our Lady as an outright and valid gift to the Society of Jesus.

Francis came away from the meeting with thoughtful features. His mind was racing back across the thorny road of his relations,

and that of others in India, with Antonio Gomes. The man had come to India fortified with the approval and endorsement of Rodriguez, the Portuguese Provincial. Gomes maintained that his directives from Rodriguez put him in the position of Vice-Provincial. His dealings with Goa students, attempting to impose upon them the strict way of novitiate life rather than that of collegians, had led them into frequent rebellion. There was the occasion when the boys sneaked out one night, cut down all the trees in the patio of the college, scampered over the wall, and ran away. The Rector's anger was monumental. Promptly he expelled *all* the students of the college. The miscreants had been native boys. Now it was announced that in the future only Portuguese boys would be admitted into the sacred halls of learning. That the college had been established primarily for the education of native youths went completely unregistered in the obstinate mind of Father Gomes.

Just as bad, if not worse, was the treatment the ill-starred Rector had been giving Father Paul Camerino, a gentle soul and one most dear to Francis. This "gentle apostle of Goa's hospitals" was experiencing a very harsh treatment and exposed to what some considered contempt. Francis had heard some reports of this. He decided what must be his first investigation upon reaching Goa and suspected what would be one of his first and necessary moves.

Whether or not Gomes had reached India with precisely the authority he deemed himself to have, well, that was a matter of the past. Francis himself had since been appointed Provincial of the entire area and mission. The time and occasion seemed at hand to rectify what needed correction, paternally, indeed, but with religious firmness. His prime feeling for the unfortunate Gomes was one of pity and compassion.

To balance the dismayed reports Francis received at this time was the heartening news of the details of the martyrdom of Father Criminale at Cape Comorin, the first Jesuit martyrdom in India. Criminale died at the hands of the marauding Badagas savages as the tribesmen assaulted the Portuguese. In the same area another Jesuit, a Brother, was to die a martyr's death not long afterward.

Criminale, however, had worked hard and long, and success followed upon his efforts. Polanco reports some fifty to sixty thousand converts in the Cape area in this year of 1552.

Francis reached Goa in February of 1552. As usual, he did not go immediately to the Jesuit college but went first to the ill in the hospitals. Meantime, the community was assembled at the entrance to St. Paul's College, "yearning," as one wrote later, "with a great desire to see Father Francis."

When he arrived at the college, Francis embraced all of the brethren. The warmth of welcome must have touched deeply the heart of the man whose affections were so keen and whose devotion to his brothers in religion was justly celebrated. "Now," he directed, "before we consider any business matters, take me to any who are sick here at the college."

What sort of appearance did Xavier present to his Jesuit brethren upon this return from the long Japanese mission? One of them has left his description.

"More tall than short, and with burning dark eyes. It is long since that his hair and beard were black. Now they are white with his labors. The thing that struck us most was Father Francis' inward joy and happiness. It seemed to radiate from within him. *Alègre y de muy buena gracia* — joyous and kindly. His expression was such that it seemed to fill all who beheld him with joy themselves. And when one or other of us was depressed, we would go to look upon Father Francis in order to lift our spirits."

Now began the matter of business, of steps to be taken and problems resolved before he would leave for China.

Good news piled up from the mission stations. A new center at Ormuz off the Arabian coast, a melting pot of Moslems, Indian Brahmins, Turks, and Arabians. The Belgian Father, Baertz, of whom Francis had spoken so highly in the past, had transformed much of Ormuz into a Christian colony. Other missions reported similar and growing success. Francis smiled quietly. The Lord had indeed been at work while Francis seemed to toil without much success in the particular mission he himself had chosen.

In between conferences and sessions at his desk, Francis' zeal, still burning as highly as ever within him, brought him to the

pulpit to preach as often as five or six times a day. The hearing of confessions went on into many hours. Francis' associates urged him to forego much of this apostolic and parochial work but Francis merely dismissed the suggestion. Whether he would acknowledge it or not, his labors had greatly weakened his health. His diet was reduced to some eggs powdered with sugar. Whenever reference was made to this enforced diet, Francis simply remarked that the eggs were an unnecessary expense. As always, his severity was reserved for and to himself. With others he was understanding, kind, and gentle.

This can be said even with regard to his dealing with Father Gomes. Gomes had insinuated himself into the good graces of the Viceroy to such an extent that the Bishop feared to interfere. No fear delayed the necessary step Francis now undertook. Gomes was the only Jesuit of the college community who had not participated in the brethren's welcome of the returning Provincial. It was not this slight which prompted Francis' measures against the unpopular Rector. Rather it was the accumulated record of disturbance, disobedience, and what human judgment at the time deemed conscious or unconscious pride.

"You will leave the college and leave Goa now," Francis directed the startled man. "It is impossible for you to hold longer the office entrusted to you. Near the Gulf of Cambay, as you know, is the little fort of Diu. You will proceed there at once and take charge of the mission of Diu and the northern area of Bombay." It was swift. Had the recipient of the order had the imagination to sense it, he would have realized that the order was likewise a merciful one.

Gomes was thunderstruck. He became loud and protesting and peripatetic. Immediately he rushed about, seeking out his friends, those whose influence he believed might change the directive and the mind of Xavier. Now he understood, at long last, the basic lack of interest in himself on the part of supposed friends. More pertinent, he was made to realize that Xavier's mind, made up after long deliberation, was not to be changed. Certainly not for the wrong reasons. And the right reasons had prompted the transfer.

It was the "sternest measure of all Francis' missionary career." Gomes left for Diu. Not unexpectedly he penned a strong letter

of violent protest to Ignatius. The Order's founder wrote back, summoning Gomes to Rome for discussion. Francis himself, upon leaving Baertz as Vice-Provincial when he sailed for China, left in Baertz's possession a sealed document containing Gomes' dismissal from the Society. This dismissal was to be effected if Gomes showed any further signs of insubordination. Before Ignatius' order came, calling Gomes to Rome, the hapless priest disobeyed again by leaving Diu. Thereupon Baertz dismissed him. Taking advantage of Ignatius' summons to Rome, Gomes believed that all might not yet be lost. He set forth for the Eternal City in early 1555, but he and other passengers aboard ship perished in a storm at sea.

While at Goa, Francis had to put his stamp of approval upon certain other dismissals, always a bitter business for one of his essentially affectionate nature. Certain novices were sent away. Two priests, presuming to come back from the Moluccas mission without permission, were dismissed, and attached themselves to the local bishop to act as diocesan priests. Andrew Carvalhez, a youthful Brother, was sent back to Portugal because of his weak health. His biographers note that Francis was not above giving the power of dismissal to certain local superiors, seemingly because of the distances and delays between Rome and the Orient.

Father Baertz had been summoned from Ormuz in order to take over the reins in Goa before Xavier's departure. Upon his arrival, the holy man found himself wreathed in embarrassment as Francis knelt and kissed his hand. The Provincial, moreover, expressed his desire to place himself under Baertz's obedience. The new Rector of the college stammered his confusion. Later he felt that things were more as they should be when Francis sent him lengthy and detailed instructions about his work as new superior of the Jesuits.

These instructions were explicit. Unless a new Provincial was sent out from Europe, Baertz was to remain in Goa for three years. He must, moreover, dismiss from the Society any recalcitrant or pride-filled Jesuit.

The last preparations for the Chinese venture advanced. Norms for their guidance were sent to various members of the mission. Emphasis was put upon due respect for the local bishop in each

area. Father Goncalves Rodriguez, working heroically in Ormuz, had inadvertently offended the local vicar. He is instructed, under the pain of mortal sin, to visit the prelate and kneel before him to seek pardon. Also to seek every week the vicar's advice. "Thus," says Francis somewhat dryly, "you will upset that father of discord, the devil." In Meliapur, Father Cyprian had argued at length with the bishop's representative. "You seem to have forgotten," Francis tells Cyprian, "the gentle advice of our Father Ignatius. I understand you have lost control, on occasion, of that violent temper of yours. I beg of you to watch it carefully. Go to the Vicar and on your knees ask for his pardon for the offense you have given him."

In such instances one does not find any attempt to please others for inferior reasons. Lip service, currying of favor, or seeking the approval of others were never part of Xavier's nature. In his directives to his subjects one sees, rather, the keen judgment of the man of religion. The bishops, and their agents, enjoy divinely constituted authority. The priests in any area might discuss matters or procedure with the reverend Ordinary. But the wish of the latter, presuming his wish entails no violation of morality or authority, must prevail. No organization can possibly maintain itself successfully on any other basis.

Four Jesuit companions are carefully chosen to accompany Francis upon his journey. Two would leave him en route to work in the Japanese mission, so recently established. Two would go to China "for better or for worse."

The priest and brother destined for China were set to work to learn the language. Instructions were given by a young Chinese student at the college. Francis determined to take the young man along to serve as catechist. Meantime the saint collected gifts of value to present to the Emperor. Velvets and silks, canopies and carpets, pictures and exquisite trinkets brought from Persia, the presents were carefully wrapped. Francis, as representative of the Pope, would bring with him the appointments necessary for a pontifical chapel.

The Jesuit matters and problems, in Goa and elsewhere, were brought to the Provincial's attention. Priests were assigned new

mission posts. Local superiors were given explicit instructions for the conduct of their offices.

Letters followed, especially to Ignatius and Rodriguez.

One of the Japanese converts, brought by Francis from Japan, was entrusted with the letter to the Jesuit General in Rome. In it, as in the letter to Simon Rodriguez, Francis repeats his firm belief that Germans and Flemings would be the best missionaries for Japan. These priests should be skilled in astronomy and other natural sciences. Ignatius will bless Francis if he will send news of the Society, for this will be a comfort "amid our immense toils."

Will they meet again in this life? It is doubtful. "May God permit us to greet each other in heaven's happiness. Even in this life, if that be to His glory. If such an earthly meeting be ordered, the religious virtue of obedience will eliminate all difficulties. Meantime, I'm told by all that it is easy to travel by land from the Chinese empire to Jerusalem. If so, I'll inform you of this and also mention the number of miles, and how many months the trip would take."

Ignatius is requested to select carefully two men for the Indian mission. One to serve as rector of the college, the other as spiritual director for the missionaries. What sort of rector is desired? "A man formed by your own hands."

There was no thought in Francis' mind that Ignatius planned to have Xavier succeed him in the office of Jesuit General. We know it ourselves, and we know that Providence decreed otherwise. Francis at this time went on with his pen, sending instruction to Simon Rodriguez. Let Simon inform Charles V that any Spanish vessels landing at Japan would invite massacre of the Spaniards. The Japanese of low character would kill the men to secure their arms. Again, Rodriguez will be kind enough to show the Japanese converts the churches, universities, and places of interest of the West. In this way they will be better qualified to carry the thought of Europe back to their own land.

Once more Francis sends information to King John III, the monarch whose emissary he was.

He is about to undertake the conversion of China. He will sail first for Malacca, to join with Pereira. Then on to China,

to seek audience with the Emperor, secure the release of captive Portuguese. Most of all, he would wage war against Satan and his works and pomps in the great Chinese empire. In order to further this work, once begun, John will send as soon as possible as many missionaries as can be gathered for the mission — learned missionaries, especially. The Bishop of Goa and the Viceroy have already approved our plans, sanctioned the role of Pereira as ambassador, and advanced this undertaking.

The monarch thus having been informed — or is *instructed* a better word? — all seemed ready for departure. Francis was first to understand that many believed he was off upon an impossible mission, an ineffectual assault against Chinese windmills. The thought did not dampen his ardor any more than did helpful reminders of Chinese edicts against foreigners. His work was the Lord's work. That, for his fiery zeal, was sufficient reason for setting out upon his venture.

There followed a last gathering of all his Jesuit brethren in the chapel of the College of St. Paul. Francis addressed the assembly in strong voice and with infectious enthusiasm for the present mission. The month was April, 1552, and most of the men who listened to his every word would never see their Provincial alive again. They studied the face of Francis, lit from within with spiritual radiance, its toil-engraved lines etched deep and his features topped by the thinning hair, now quite white. His words were of extreme interest to Father Balthazar Gago, who was later to be sent, at the last minute, to Japan instead of accompanying Xavier to China, and to the Brother, Alvaro Fereira, later to be dismissed for cowardice. When the last hours upon earth of this hope-filled man arrived, it would be only the Chinese youth, Antonio, who knelt in the windswept hut as the flame of a great spirit died away.

Holy Thursday arrived, the date for sailing. Francis' forty-sixth birthday had occurred one week before. He embraced, one by one, the brethren so dear to him, "often and with tears, even as if he would engrave their faces within his own heart."

A final general blessing and then the small group of travelers moved toward the ship, paying, on the way, a brief visit with a

government representative, Cosmas Anes. "And at what time will we behold you again?" asked Anes. Francis smiled and pondered the question thoughtfully.

"In the Valley of Josaphat," he said at length.

At the ship a brief and final embrace for the Jesuits who would remain in Goa; then up the slight wooden ramp strode this son of Ignatius whose last letter to his spiritual father closed with the words, "the least of your sons and farthest exiled from your company."

The last of all his journeyings had begun.

[Chapter 20]

“THERE IS AN ISLAND CALLED SANCIAN...”

Then, as now, men in sail-carried ships were dependent upon the weather and the winds. Francis and his companions were delayed for three days. Impatiently they waited a favoring wind. When it came, on Easter Sunday, all rejoiced, the lines were cast off, and the vessel moved seaward. On its deck, gazing upon Goa for what his inward spirit seems to have told him was the last time, Francis Xavier sailed on the hapless expedition into China.

Ahead was the meeting with Pereira, so long counted upon. Ahead, also, was the disgraceful opposition of Alvaro. Francis, fortunately, could not have foreseen this. Even if he had, it is not improbable that he would have undertaken the expedition, trusting to Providence to bring the Governor of Malacca to a more favorable state of mind.

One man with face set confidently against the forbidden empire of China is a striking picture. The Mother Church, however, needed men of religious daring and founded virtue in the middle of the sixteenth century.

The long sessions of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) were to do much to repair the house of God and remedy accumulated abuses, hitherto sanctioned in the misguided, selfish and even sensual ambitions of certain churchmen. The work of the persistent Paul III (whose death was a serious temporary setback to the work of the Council in 1549) and the able reforms of Julius III proved a boon to the health of the Church.

Xavier, a man on fire for spiritual conquest of the Orient,

served the Mother Church well. The results of his labors were not immediately evident to the worker. Not, at least, to the point where Francis could foresee, for instance, that the tiny flower of faith planted among Japan's millions would never wholly fade.

Francis' reports and letters to the Society in Europe fired many a contemporary and later Jesuit with deep desire for the evangelization of Japan and China.

Six months after Francis' departure from Goa, Matteo Ricci was born in Italy. As a Jesuit missionary he lives in history as the greatest of the priests to work in the Chinese mission in the sixteenth century. To Peking this thorough Chinese scholar and master of the language brought the Gospel and the Faith. A master of astronomy and other branches of natural science, Ricci translated into Chinese the first six books of Euclid and, with graceful change of pace, composed a catechism titled *The True Doctrine of God*. The story of Ricci, however, and of countless other missionaries in the East, does not pertain to this account and has well been told elsewhere.

The caliber of such men was well epitomized by the Abbé Dubois, a missionary in India in modern times: "They were giants. And they triumphed in their day, because neither the world nor the devil could withstand the might that was in them."

Xavier had told Diego Pereira, in their earlier conversations, that the devil would not be one to yield without a struggle in this matter of the Chinese expedition. The father of evil may or may not have had a hand in the storms and plague besetting the ship in the Malayan Strait, and the crew members upon arrival in Malacca. As we know, storms at sea were not new to Francis. The crying of winds and gale were an accompaniment to most of the sea journeys he undertook. Watching Francis at prayer, while the vessel buffeted its way through the Malayan storm, his companions observed an unwonted sadness in his features.

"You are ill, Father Francis," they said.

"No," the saint replied sadly, "I am troubled. Troubled because a severe epidemic of plague is even now raging at Malacca."

They stared at him but said nothing. Men had learned that this priest had powers of vision not enjoyed by other men. If

he bespoke a plague at Malacca, they would find one there. And they did. Upon reaching the stricken city, Francis busied himself immediately with a punishing round of nursing the sick, many of whom died in his arms. To add to his concern, some of his own ship's crew members sickened and died. Xavier and his fellow Jesuits, working with the diseased, escaped all contagion. Days and nights were spent in the huts along the shore, erected hurriedly under Francis' direction for the benefit of those unable to find space in overcrowded hospitals.

The epidemic passed quickly. While the last to die were being buried, Francis determinedly set about his major work, that of arranging with the Governor what was necessary for the sailing to China. It was now that the devil seems to have successfully initiated that sequence of events in which human perversity and opposition thwarted Francis at every turn. Alvaro the Governor took the lead in the miserable opposition, and the heartbreaking struggle against human resistance carried right down to the island of Sancian.

It is Alvaro d'Ataide's unenviable distinction to be remembered in history solely because of his opposition to Francis Xavier. With his brother, Pedro, no longer in command at Malacca, Alvaro governed with smug and obstinate insistence upon what he deemed his own rights and position. Pereira had been duly accredited as ambassador to China but D'Ataide would have none of this. Not if he could help prevent such ambassadorship from succeeding. When Diego arrived from Sunda, Alvaro was incensed because he himself was not the Portuguese choice as ambassador, a role which would have brought monies into his pocket for the payment of his continually mounting gambling debts. Francis had warned his friend to come into Malacca with as little pomp or ceremony as possible because the Governor's mind was already known.

D'Ataide was of the tribe of bullies who permit no considerations of reverence or common decency to thwart their aims. When Diego's ship, the *Santa Cruz*, reached Malacca, the Governor seized the rudder of the ship. The pretext used was a hastily invented invasion by Javanese. The flimsy pretense soon became evident. Francis, his diplomacy and patience worn thin, registered strong protest. Pedro da Gama and Alvarez, the guardian of the King's

revenues, added their even stronger protests, but it was in vain. The wrath and indignation of the Pope in Rome and the monarch in Portugal? Contemptuously these were dismissed as remote and ephemeral by the red-faced Governor. Xavier wanted assistance, or at least Pereira's own ship, in order to go to China?

"The priest can go to China, or to the devil if he likes, but he will not go on the *Santa Cruz* with Pereira. That man will not sail from Malacca as long as I am Captain-General of the Sea."

"But the priest must have Pereira with him as captain," insisted Alvarez. "Father Francis bears King John's mandate. If you resist his purposes, you risk the charge of high treason."

Alvaro, fuming with obstinate anger, spat heavily upon the floor. Then, deliberately, he ground his heel upon the spittle. "There! That's what I care for the mandates of your precious King!"

Xavier made a desperate appeal to the Governor's professed Catholicity. He requested the Vicar of Malacca to read the papal *Decretal*, threatening excommunication upon all who dared to interfere with the projects of the Apostolic Nuncio. It was useless. The Governor erupted in a semihysterical shouting attack upon the Nuncio. This Xavier is a charlatan, a wicked and evil hypocrite of the first rank, and the credentials and papers he carried were all deliberate forgeries.

The violence and abuse was taken up and carried out by the Governor's yes men and sycophant friends. When the Vicar, carrying out Francis' orders, excommunicated Alvaro and all who aided him in opposing Francis' mission, the situation became dangerous for the priest. He could not leave his place of residence without being subject to insults and, at times, the flung stones of his deriders. The word spread in Malacca that this persecution "might well pass as Father Francis' martyrdom." Soon he did not dare move through the streets. His fear was not for himself as an individual but rather that his remaining purpose to bring the Faith to China would collapse if he was killed or seriously injured.

The *Santa Cruz* was now in the possession of the ambitious Alvaro. Francis decided, a decision more typical of saints than

ordinary mortals, to offer Mass each morning for Alvaro. He was troubled by the seeming state of the Governor's soul. To flagrant disobedience and pride, Alvaro entered upon larceny. He decided to sell the *Santa Cruz* or, failing that, to use it for his own business purposes. Pereira was a disheartened and an angry victim of theft in high places. To add to his indignation, the rudder of his ship was hanging up at the official residence of the "Admiral." When his seething crew members would resort to violence, it was upon Francis' advice that the men were restrained.

Meanwhile, in a letter filled with sadness, Francis told his friend of his great grief because he, Francis, had brought about such ruin. The wording of the letter is both startling and indicative of the low point Xavier had reached as disappointment came crowding in upon him.

"It is because my sins have been so great that they have been enough to cause both my own ruin and yours, as well. You have good excuse should you criticize me because I have brought down both yourself and the men who would have traveled with us. Was it not, for instance, at my request that you put forth forty thousand *pardoes* for gifts for the Chinese emperor, as well as the costs for the vessel and its cargo? Nevertheless, dear Diego, I beseech you to recall that my constant purpose was to be helpful to you in your service of God. If this were not so, I truly would die of grief at this time."

The letter concludes with a request that Pereira do not come to visit Francis, for the latter would find the heartbreak almost too much to bear. Meanwhile, however, he will beg God to assist Diego and make him return for all his help and kindness. Diego can take some consolation, if any is to be found, in the knowledge that Francis will write a full account of the miserable affair to the King of Portugal.

The little personal triumph, if the word might be used, of the acclaim given Francis by his brethren and friends during the recent Goa visitation was all a thing of the past now. A share of the cross of his Master has been laid heavily upon the priest's shoulders. He will welcome it and, as best he might, he will carry it. Plans must be changed. "There is an island called Sancian,"

Francis had told his brother Jesuits in India, "and from Sancian I will make my entry into China." The purpose still remained although the carrying out of the original plans must perforce undergo change.

In the Church of Our Lady of the Mount, where Francis prayed all night before Mary's statue, his plans were revised. Suspecting, and rightly, that Alvaro's basic opposition was directed at Pereira, rather than himself, Francis believed he could yet make the proposed voyage if the Governor understood that Pereira would not be among those on the *Santa Cruz*. This belief proved correct. Again, permission for the trip might be more speedily forthcoming if Francis proposed to reduce the number of Jesuits bound for the north. Gago and the others would be sent on to Japan. Francis would take with himself only a lay Brother and the faithful Chinese youth, Antonio.

Pereira never for a moment misunderstood his friend's purposes nor suffered their friendship to lessen. The devil in the piece was Alvaro. The fault was his. So be it. If Alvaro would not permit Diego to sail on the *Santa Cruz*, well, at least his friend Xavier could sail and reach his objective.

Learning that the Governor was not averse to Francis' embarking upon the *Santa Cruz*, about to sail to Sancian's Portuguese colony, the saint boarded the vessel for the voyage. Pereira was refused permission to board ship. He appointed Gaspar Mendez de Vasconcellos to travel with Xavier and protect the priest's interests. Francis advised that another be chosen, because Mendez would soon die. Bewildered, Pereira appointed an agent named Escandel to accompany Francis. Before the *Santa Cruz* reached Sancian, Mendez was dead at Malacca.

Francis understood perfectly the mind of Alvaro d'Ataide. The Governor believed that Francis, without Pereira, could not succeed in entering China. The worldling had spiked the embassy project.

"Will you visit the Governor to take formal leave of him?"

The Vicar-General's question brought a quick answer from the saint. "No, I will not. My feeling for the man contains no rancor, but I shall not meet Alvaro again until we are face to face in

the Valley of Josaphat. At the judgment seat of God our separate accounts will be rendered.”

“This parting, then,” said the Vicar softly, “it is final?”

Francis smiled quietly. “That we can leave in the will of God.”

All Francis’ biographers note a striking gesture now offered by Xavier. On the way to the ship he brought his companions into a small church. He prostrated himself before the altar, then, rising, removed his sandals. While his companions watched, amazed, Francis beat the soles of the sandals briskly against the stone flooring.

“You remember the injunction of our Lord,” he said, “telling us to shake the dust of an unfriendly place from the soles of our feet, and to move on. Well, you see me now, shaking the dust of Malacca from my feet. I will not carry away the dust of this wretched place with me. And now, let us be gone.”

Instead of the accustomed nemesis aboard ship — a heavy storm — Francis experienced the reverse. The *Santa Cruz* was delayed for two weeks by a dead calm. To relieve the saint’s impatience at the delay was the arrival of Father Beira from the Moluccas. The meeting of the two friends was joyous. Beira had much to tell Francis of the collapse of the Moslem power in the islands and the greatly improved position of the Christian converts. Xavier explained to Beira his own circumstances and the intent of D’Ataide to prevent the entry into China.

“But I will get in somehow,” Francis said with determination. “If for no other reason than to try to relieve the lot of the poor Portuguese in the Canton prisons.”

The ship was overcrowded. When drinking water ran low, Francis ordered sea water to be put into the casks. Over these he made the sign of the cross; thereupon the water was found to be clear, sweet, and quite drinkable. The miracle led to the conversion of some Moslems aboard. After the ship sailed, a small boy was lost overboard. Francis asked the distraught father, “Will you accept belief in Jesus Christ if God brings back your child?” Needless to say the pagan promised willingly. Three days later the child was found, seated on the deck, quite unable to recall

anything that had happened to him since he had gone overboard. During a short stay in the Straits of Singapore, Francis warned that a certain invalid would die if the natives insisted on bringing the sick man aboard ship. His advice was ignored, and the man's death occurred shortly after he was carried onto the deck.

The *Santa Cruz* reached Singapore in mid-July. During the time Francis stayed in the old city at the foot of the Malay Peninsula, he visited his old friend, Father Perez, who was very ill with plague. Perez professed his happiness because he could die in Francis' arms. Francis smilingly reassured the sick man he had many more years of life ahead of him.

Francis' concern for his fellow Jesuits was unfailing. Busy with China-directed plans, he found time to write now to Baertz, instructing him to assist Beira, with priests and Brothers, in the heroic priest's struggle against Mohammedanism in the mission field. Gaspard is also directed to provide gold for the men going to Japan. The Japanese will be extending their best welcome mats for any missionary who comes bearing gifts in the form of gold pieces.

The good Pereira, his heels but probably not his temper cooling in Malacca, receives an encouraging letter "from this Strait of Singapore." When the Lord assists me into China, Francis assures Diego, "I shall indeed inform the Portuguese prisoners there how much they stand in your debt. I will greet all of them in your name. And they shall hear of the great expense you went to in their behalf. Best of all I'll promise them their liberty, God willing, by next year. Meanwhile, do visit the Fathers at the college, and with them seek consolation. *Vosso muito grande amigo, Francisco.*"

So the last messages are sent. Gaspard is informed that, if actual entry into China proves impossible (had Francis' vision an inkling of the end of his journey?) let the Jesuits look for him in Goa by December. In writing Pereira, Francis, ever in possession of his religious equilibrium, sets forth simply his trust in God, in whose name he has set forth, and for whom he is quite willing to meet with rebuffs.

"How false it is to forget God, from whom everything comes,

and to believe one can get what one seeks from men instead! I endeavor to return good to those who oppose me for I know that God will indeed chastise them. You'll yet see how He punishes everyone opposing me while in God's service. I, of course, am filled with pity for such men, knowing their chastisement will be much more than even they suspect."

On this note of compassion, this sadness for those who would hinder the work of God, Francis set sail for the "island called Sancian."

On the voyage northward Francis busied himself in tending the sick, seemingly always present on overcrowded Oriental sailing vessels. "The Father," a passenger testified, "never rested, except in his prayers. At all other times he was with the stricken. If they needed chicken for food, he would buy fowl for them with money I provided. Most of his own meals he saved to give those who suffered, and then begged for more from other travelers. His own hands fed the sick. And so he passed the entire time of the voyage."

At the end of the summer the *Santa Cruz* anchored at Sancian, near some Portuguese trading ships. Chinese junks, like children's toy boats, bobbed up and down on the bay waters. Some temporary huts on the slope of the hill overlooking the harbor were the residences of transient Portuguese merchants and ship captains. To sustain themselves, the few Chinese living upon Sancian sold to the foreigners what few vegetables and chickens they could raise on the uninviting island off the Chinese mainland. Sancian itself was one of three islands standing closely together. The Portuguese kept watch at night, eyeing the night-black sea horizons lest Chinese government agents surprise and seize their ships. By daylight they busied themselves trading with Chinese smugglers from Canton and the mainland.

Because of his dignity, Francis was assigned a little hut on the island where he might offer Mass. He might, too, if he cared, live as long as he liked in the hut. From the answers to his unceasing requests, to successive smugglers and merchants, it appeared that many believed he would wait in his hut forever. At least, the captains of all types of seacraft gave him the same

answer. To transport a foreigner, priest or not, would be to risk their own necks. Meantime a man reached Sancian with firsthand stories of the pains and tortures of the Canton prisons. He had been a prisoner and by some incredible luck had escaped. Those, he explained, who were swiftly executed were the "fortunate ones." The others, chained on their stomachs to the ground, in the filth, flies, and agony of barbarous jails, these did not even bear thinking about. It was too horrible.

Francis' heart sank. His distress of body, because of internal disorders, troubled him. But it was his anguish of mind, facing a continual refusal to be taken to where he might at least solace the imprisoned Portuguese, or share their lot, which depressed him. The "impatient one" now, more than ever before, was being given opportunity to practice resignation and restless patience.

At the beginning, the Portuguese professed great pleasure in having the priest with them. He could offer the Mass each day and teach the slaves and children. The adults were not seeking any teaching or instruction. Nor were they offering Francis any assistance. From one to another of them, from skipper to skipper, he went with increasing weariness of spirit. No. They could not dare to carry him to the mainland.

It was a far road which took the proud young and talented university professor, from the halls of Paris to the drab, wasting frustration of a tiny, seemingly Godforsaken islet on the rim of Oriental civilization. On that island day followed day and gathered themselves into weeks. Recurring bouts with fever slowly wore down the remaining strength in Xavier's thin and tired body. His eyes turned hungrily to the dim outline of the Chinese coast, some leagues distant. For all the help he might hope to receive from other human beings on Sancian, Canton could just as well have been on the moon.

Partly to occupy himself, partly to satisfy his inward zeal, Francis taught catechism to the few children upon the island. His struggles against alarmingly recurrent shivering fits lessened the number of sermons he could preach to those few willing to listen to his words. In vain Antonio, distraught with concern for his "father's" health, urged more moderation, more rest.

“There is never time to rest, Antonio,” was the only answer he received to his protests. “Rest will come later.”

Rest, an unending rest from labors, was to come soon. Now — and for Francis the time was always *now* — work was to be done. For the twenty Negro and Arab slaves on the island, many of them diseased and dying, the saint begged food from the riffraff merchantmen in the harbor. To his dismay he one day discovered a girl among the men clustering near the ships. He spoke with her, reasoned with her. She must marry her lover. “This was so easily said, my Father, but where am I to find the demanded dowry?” Francis appeals to one Velho for the necessary money. Velho, a Portuguese merchant and passing friend of earlier meetings, gives Francis the keys to his money chest. Later the merchant is surprised to find his money intact.

“I thought you were going to borrow money from my store?”

A reassuring smile rises on Francis’ pinched face. “But I did,” he says, “I took three hundred *cruzadoes*. And God will bless you for your generosity because you have helped save a young woman who badly needed help.”

Velho marveled at the words. There was something above the merely natural about this Xavier. The story of the incident was retold to other Portuguese. Many shrugged in disbelief. Others, willing to acknowledge the story as true, suggested that the worker of miracles might well devote his thaumaturgic powers to transporting himself to the empire of sixty million souls across the intervening waters.

On October 22, Francis sent a letter to Father Perez and the faithful Pereira, a letter filled with new hope.

He has met, thanks be to the good God, a Chinese trader, “an honorable gentleman from Canton.” The way is open now to cross the thirty miles of water. The merchant would return later in a junk, accompanied only by his own sons and a few slaves, and would carry Francis to the mainland. For three or four days Francis would be hidden in the trader’s house. Thereafter, on a dark night, he would be set upon the Canton road. It would be up to the priest then to decide whether to enter Canton or proceed in the direction of Peking. Truly, providence was aiding

Francis now. And all this for the two hundred measures of pepper Francis would secure for the Chinese merchant as the passage price.

"I will be smuggled in," he wrote, "with my few books and a little parcel of clothes. Most probably I will proceed directly to the Governor's residence in Canton and give Bishop Albuquerque's letter. I will tell the Governor I have come at the direction of the government of Portugal and to declare the Law of God."

To expedite matters, Francis sent back to India the lay Brother who would have formed part of the embassy if conditions had been more favorable. He must enter China alone. If there was danger, better to go it alone, better to enter by himself the noisome prison.

The Chinese trader sailed away, leaving high hope in Francis' heart. The sight of the other Chinese craft, sailing junks and tiny vessels, moving away from Sancian before winter descended, did not dismay him. All was well. The trader had promised, and there was moreover the lure of the reward Francis would give him for his assistance. Francis now would wait alone with Antonio for the promised day of entry into China.

To some observers the scheme seemed fantastic. One man against the hostility of pagans. Francis Xavier, a priest, sickly and undernourished, about to win the Chinese empire to a cause. Some writers have criticized what they deem lack of perspective on Xavier's part. Why did he not give up, why not acknowledge defeat?

"If he had come back to India," Father Brou makes answer, "returning whence he had set forth, returning with sorrow and peace of soul, then other missionaries might have warrant in the future for not setting out to achieve the impossible. Francis, his visions and plans exhausted, still did not believe his *consummatum est* was at hand. What should he do but go on, relying upon God alone? After worldly judgment has had its final say, it is then the divine folly resumes the tale."

The *denouement*, when history looks back upon it, had elements of folly and of seeming waste in it. Over all, however, rests an

atmosphere of the divine. The traveler spent in his search, the hunter of souls come to the final hill, the little wind-swept hut on the low slope of the west side of Sancian.

The Portuguese boarded their ships and many sailed away. Francis was left, nursing his doomed hope, with a few parting gifts left him by the Europeans. A handful of almonds, a few vegetables, and an assurance that those departing wished him well. Antonio relates that the fever and shaking fits grew more recurrent during the days of waiting. Often Francis was “both hungry and half frozen.” The early wintry winds, sweeping across the water, carried the chill warning of worse days ahead.

Francis clutched his ragged soutane about his wasting frame. All would be well. He had, indeed, told Pereira that, if the entry to China did collapse in frustration, he would manage to enter the country by way of Siam. “I will wait for you in China, my dear Diego,” he had written. “And when you come you will find me in either the stocks of Canton, or in honor at Peking.”

On November 13, a week before the date promised by the Chinese trader for his return, Francis wrote the last of his letters.

“Will I actually reach China? I cannot say. All things up to now seem to have been against me. Much time has passed since I seemed less desirous to keep alive than I now feel.”

The words seem a premonition of the end of the story. The final hour of expectancy came at dawn of November 19, the day the trader was to arrive. Francis scanned the horizon with hungry eyes. Beside him, in a neat little pile, was the package of books and clothes, ready for the trip. Antonio prayed as he had never prayed before. The men waited, waited, and watched for the sail that never showed. Night came down with indifferent cold and defeat, and in his heart Xavier acknowledged to himself that the land of China, his heart's desire, had defeated him.

“At that hour,” Antonio said, “he collapsed and his illness, hitherto held back by his hopefulness, crowded in upon him.”

The Portuguese had told Francis they hoped he would not go into China, or even make the attempt, until they had left Sancian. They had their wives and children to think of. Had Francis been caught entering the forbidden land, the Chinese

authorities might swoop upon Sancian and murder all the Portuguese. Francis, understanding now that to expect the Chinese to come for him was futile, found himself practically alone. The remaining few Portuguese were wary of him because in his personal ambition for entry into China he inevitably constituted a threat to their safety.

Now Pereira's agent, Escandel, and those few he might deem personal friends, were gone. The *Santa Cruz* stood in the harbor, lading for the return trip to Malacca. Its timid sailors, fearing to return to Alvaro with word of assistance given to Xavier, left the priest strictly alone. To Antonio they gave a bit of food to be carried to the priest, lying feverish in his little hut.

On November 20, Francis offered his last Mass, struggling against his weakness to complete the sacrifice. The last *Ite, missa est* was spoken. For the speaker, himself one sent by God and Ignatius, the sacrifice of a life lived in union with the great High Priest was reaching its close.

His fever increased. In the thought that it might make him more comfortable, Francis was brought aboard the *Santa Cruz*. He told the pilot, Joam da Aguiar, that he felt the hour of his death to be approaching. The thought did not appear to trouble him. Francis, understood, of course, that the hour of death is frequently seized upon by the enemy of souls for a final assault upon Christian fortitude. In one of Xavier's last letters he had spoken of man's final hour. "Then it is that temptations will multiply, and there will be difficulties and perils for both body and soul, difficulties such as we have never met before."

The incessant motion of the ship, riding at anchor, gave the ill man more pain and less rest. Francis was taken ashore to be laid upon the flooring of the tiny hut. The *Santa Cruz* would sail away shortly thereafter on its return voyage to Malacca. The pilot's parting gift was a pair of warm stockings, a feeble gesture against the increasing cold of the late November winds.

What faint revival of hope followed the bitter disappointment of the 19th died out as Antonio watched beside the pallet of Xavier. The boy's prime concern was the recovery of his friend. Francis was bled but the improvement was negligible. The

amateur operation, performed twice on Francis' arm by one George Alvarez, was done in such poor wise that its chief result was a fresh attack of nausea and convulsions.

The dying man passed into three days of delirium and semi-consciousness. The fire of his life was dying out but his flaming love of Christ manifested itself in ejaculations and jumbled fragments of prayers. All through Thursday and Friday, the first and second days of December, Francis seemed to the anguished eyes and ears of Antonio to be far away in his delirium.

It is now that his mind is, indeed, far away. Back, for instance, in the Basque days of his sunlit boyhood. Back in the games of childhood and young manhood, with companions of long ago, amid the sloping hills of Navarre. The snatches of Basque phrases fall from the lips of the wan face. Francis' mind seems no longer dependent upon the fragile, wasting body, and, like some homing bird released, wings away in the direction of its two greatest loves. These are the heaven he is soon to enter and the memory-locked youthful days spent amid the enchanting beauty of old Navarre.

The dying priest's fever-dried lips are moistened by the watching boy with a few drops of water. Little strength remains as Friday night descends. The sacking drawn across Francis' body in a feeble attempt to withstand the chill of the cold night air is pitiful protection. The fire of Francis Xavier, the flame with which he went forth "to set the world on fire," sinks now to a diminishing and almost spent flame, soon to be extinguished. The darkness and cold of this winter of discontent envelop the makeshift hut on the slope of an insignificant island.

Antonio lights a small candle and sets it behind a tiny shield of stretched cloth. The flickering interplay of light and shadow reflects upon the drawn white face of the reclining figure on the pallet. Francis' hands lift slowly from the sacking, uncertainly groping through the moving shadows.

"Jesus, O son of David, have mercy on me. . . . O Mary, show thyself a Mother. . . . O Blessed Trinity . . ."

The phrases come at intervals. Antonio, struggling to fend sleep from his own tired eyes, knows that midnight has come and gone.

The west side of the weak palm-leaf thatched hut has had holes torn in it and the wind blows across Francis' motionless form. From not far away comes the restless sounds of the lapping waves at the dark water's edge. The candle is almost burned out as the deepest darkness, that just before dawn itself, wraps the hut in its thickened gloom. On his knees beside this man, his friend and guide, Antonio gazes into the staring eyes. What might be in his friend's mind at this last moment? That Antonio cannot tell. This has been a great man, one of the greatest. Is his soul experiencing that last and greatest temptation it is said great souls experience: despair, not because of the memory of this or that passing mistake, but the wrenching, assaulting despair which believes that the *entire* way of life has been a mistake from the beginning?

Antonio lifts the little crucifix and gently places it in Francis' hand. He presses the cold fingers about the hard wood, then lifts hand and crucifix to bring the figure of the Crucified within the vision, such as it is, of the priest.

Almost mechanically the unnaturally bright eyes focus, through the half-light, upon the suspended Christ. For Francis Xavier, even as long before for the One he has loved beyond all earthly love, merciful death is at hand.

"In Thee, O Lord, I have hoped." The words are faint and seem swallowed up in the incessant sighing of the night wind. *"Let me not be forgotten forever."*

The lifted hand falls. The whispering echoes of the last struggling words of trust vanish in the darkness. Something else vanishes as well. Antonio sees it disappear in the staring eyes of the dead. The candle a few feet away upon the floor sputters, bravely continuing to pierce the darkness. But Antonio has seen another flame flicker for the last time, and disappear. The fire of Francis Xavier has burned out.

The little Chinese boy sinks to the floor, overcome by exhaustion and fatigue. He sleeps. The first gray light of dawn, coming within the hour, finds the two prone figures, motionless upon the flooring of the hut.

It is the third day of December, in the year of our Lord 1552.

• [Chapter 21] •

THE FINGER OF GOD

A man who was primarily a man of action passed from the earthly scene in the death of Xavier. The whole world of the Orient could not, even with its immensity, dwarf his zeal. He loved God as few men have loved Him. India, the Straits, the Moluccas, the Japanese empire, and the colossal breadth of China, all these he would win for the Christ.

Such a man is inevitably the target of criticism, especially from contemporaries. This spiritual Don Quixote obviously tilted at windmills whose enormous size should have proved a warning. History knows that they didn't. If there was imprudence in undertaking vast mission areas alone, Francis' defenders have always reminded critics of the priest's *ratio agendi*. He estimated himself not so much as a free-lance missionary. Rather he believed that, going ahead with the wisdom born of experience, he could both chart a course for those who followed after and at the same time actively prove that the missionary cannot afford to entertain human fears. It belabors the obvious, moreover, to repeat that Francis Xavier was essentially a man of prayer. In his hours of communion with God his keen brain fashioned both purpose and method. Plans were constantly alive and active upon the surface of his mind, and studying his letters and directives one sees evidence of constant planning. He is the man *par excellence* who "sleeps at the foot of the altar."

Few men chosen by God have been as merry, as friendly, as stimulating with sheer personal affection in human relationships. He enjoys, with Francis of Assisi, the distinction of "belonging

to the whole world." Reverent toward all legitimate authority and yet quite capable of reminding those who rule of their obligations and defects, he was altogether innocent of that corroding intellectual virus called "human respect." To the Protestant world, as well as to the Catholic, there remains an unfailing fascination in the memory of the man Xavier. To those of his own faith it is a truism to say that he is the greatest figure, second only to Paul, in missionary history.

He moves across the darkling plain of the turbulent sixteenth century with judgment which sees all things in relation to eternity. His instinctive shrewdness served to tell him not only the market price of, for instance, a slave on the auction block in some Oriental mart. It also estimated, and correctly, the value of this human chattel in the eyes of One who died in agony for *all* men. His optimism stemmed not from an inane and wishful thinking of the *tout est pour le mieux* variety. More frequently than not, even when his dealings were with the men of the religious Society he loved so well, things were *not* for the best. What mattered, for Francis, was that they could be made better.

Men frequently, and mistakenly, tend to judge from the outward habit the inward man. Not so with the Lord. He seeth and doeth all things mightily and His judgments are right. In what remains of the story of Francis Xavier the world catches a glimpse of what God has thought of the saint. The glimpse is enough to have wrung from each succeeding generation the spontaneous cry: *Digitus Dei hic est!*

Truly the finger of God is here. It begins tracing its sacred outline immediately following the saint's death.

Burial of Francis' body took place upon the day he died. The crew of the *Santa Cruz* learned of his death and came ashore. "The holy Father's face," Antonio records, "stayed beautiful, with such new red coloring that he seemed yet alive, as forsooth I trust he is alive now in heaven." The sailors kissed the thin hands of the dead, praying to one whom they, too, believed to be with God. It is believed that the fear of being reported to Alvaro as overfriendly to Xavier explains why the crew did not escort the body to its grave.

Only Antonio, the Portuguese captain, and a pair of Negro slaves carried the corpse, in its Chinese coffin, to the hastily dug grave on the summit of the low hill. The day was bitterly cold and there was little or no ceremony beyond a quickly muttered prayer. Two bags of quicklime had been poured about the body, clothed in vestments, within the coffin. It was with the purpose of bringing the bones of the saint back to India, later and when convenient, that Antonio and the ship's captain decided to use the quicklime. The substance — so it was believed — would quickly eat away all clothing and the flesh remaining upon the wasted body.

So was buried in the wind-swept hill of insignificant Sancian a man recognized by secular and religious historians as one of the giants of the sixteenth century. A rough wooden cross was placed at the foot of the grave and a small mound of stones at either end.

In mid-February, the time for the *Santa Cruz* to return to Malacca, Antonio and Aguiar prepared to disinter the body. The coffin was exhumed and opened and the covering lime removed. Now the finger of God begins to write the record of divine approval of Francis Xavier. His body is found unaffected by the lime. It is fresh and with the red glow of health which gives the appearance, not of death, but of sleep. The flesh is soft and blood still stands in the veins. An incision made near the left knee bleeds freely. Even the clothes are utterly unharmed by the quicklime.

Who can even guess at the bewilderment of the Portuguese and the faithful Antonio? The sailors, hitherto restrained by their servile fear of the distant Alvaro, throw aside all restraint in their veneration of the dead. They fall beside the quiet remains with tears and loud prayers, a chant of gratitude to God who has so singularly blessed this man to whom they had proved so unkind, a cry of intercession to the priest and loud pleas to Francis to forgive them for all the hurt they have done him. Loud, too, were their denunciations of the Admiral Alvaro, the unspeakable one in Malacca whose judgment they have so cravenly feared.

The coffin with the body, exuding a preternatural fragrance, was carefully placed aboard the *Santa Cruz*. Immediately the ship

set sail for Malacca. Everyone aboard sensed that a great treasure was in their charge. When the quick journey was delayed temporarily in the Singapore Strait by the ship's running aground on a sandbank, the crew begged Francis' assistance. Immediately the ship glided off into deep water. Late in the evening of March 22, the vessel reached Malacca.

Father Perez was no longer in the city but the crowds that came running to the harbor included the vicar-general of the area. The loyal Diego Pereira and many of the local clergy were in the welcoming throng. A small party, including the vicar-general and some of the priests, boarded the ship the same evening. Together they examined the body, marveling at its extraordinary preservation and recording testimony of their findings.

On the following day the great procession to the Church of Our Lady of the Mount took place. The progress of the coffin through the streets of old Malacca was a triumph for both Xavier and the Christian religion.

Two incidents, one incontestable and one of doubtful nature, are associated with the procession. The plague that had proved so costly in Malacca ceased altogether from March 23 onward. The cortege (many have claimed) passed the Governor's palace in which the man who had proved Francis' evil genius busied himself with friends at gambling. He is said to have left the card table as the singing throngs raised loud voices in hymns, and to have gone to his broad open window for a few moments to survey the funeral procession. Alvaro considered the parade contemptuously for a while, then spat from the window. "These fools! Religion has made them mad." Thereupon he is reported to have returned to his card game.

Francis' body was placed with loving reverence near the altar of the Church of Our Lady of the Mount. For this second burial it was removed from the coffin, because the grave, hewn in the rock, was so narrow. And the wound resulting from the effort to fit the body within caused a cut in the shoulder of the saint. From the wound blood trickled, fresh and of sweet odor.

In August, five months later, Father Beira and two companions reached Malacca. The priest, traveling back to his mission in the

Moluccas, was filled with desire to look upon Francis' face. In secret the body was disinterred. Again there was no corruption evident. The cloth covering Francis' face was bloodstained from cuts resulting from the pressure attendant to the time of burial.

At Beira's direction, Diego Pereira had a handsome coffin fashioned and within it, wrapped in rich and gold brocade, the body was laid, the head resting upon a silk cushion. There would be opportunity soon, at the time of the approaching monsoon, to transfer the body to Goa. Brother Manuel Tavora guarded the coffin in a secure place. Soon another Jesuit, Pedro Alcacova, reached Malacca, returning from Japan. The two religious arranged for the trip to India. On December 11, upon an old vessel reported in most accounts as practically unseaworthy, the two religious set sail with their precious burden.

Before its arrival in Cochin, in January, the old ship experienced a dangerous session when storms drove it upon menacing shoals. The sailors' prayers to "the Apostle" saved both the ship and the lives of the crew. During a temporary stay at Cochin, Father Perez and others came aboard in order to venerate the coffin and its sacred contents. During the voyage northward a stop was made at Baticala. There a woman, extremely ill, insisted that she would be cured if she could be carried aboard the ship and see the remains. Her request was acceded to and, being brought to the body on the sailing vessel, the woman was immediately restored to health.

While in Baticala the storm winds from the north were continually increasing in intensity. The captain of the battered ship which carried Xavier's body knew it would be impossible to reach the capital in these churning seas. He traveled to Goa, accordingly, in a small but sturdy boat, and brought word to the Viceroy of the great treasure resting in Baticala.

It was enough. The Viceroy immediately sent Father Núñez, now rector of Santa Fe College, together with a group of priests and excited students, to Baticala on a sturdy, well-equipped galley. All Goa meantime seethed with excitement as the word spread through the city that its "Father Francis," the saint whose words and deeds for the city and its people were unforgotten and

unforgettable, was coming home at last. Gaspar Baertz had died, worn out with his labors, in the previous October. Núñez had succeeded him as head of the college. Now the entire Jesuit community was alive with almost overpowering expectancy. Surely the Lord had fashioned no man in his generation as great as Francis Xavier, unless it be Father Ignatius himself. Now Father Francis, finally at rest in death, is being brought back to them.

The first landing was made at Ribendar upon the return trip. There, a few miles from Goa, Father Núñez directed that the galley spend the night at anchor. In Núñez' memory still rang the salvos of artillery thundering in salute to Xavier. These came from other ships in the harbor of Baticala, completely drowning out the chanted *Benedictus dominus Deus* of the joyous students upon the galley's decks.

Núñez sent word, as soon as anchor was dropped, to the college, informing all of the safe return. The following morning a great state procession into the city took place following the arrival of the ship at Goa harbor. At dawn Father Perez had said Mass beside the coffin in the little Church of Our Lady at Baticala. Shortly thereafter six great boats came to accompany the escort ship to Goa, and by the time the little flotilla reached Goa's harbor the number of ships had increased to twenty.

The harbor area thronged with milling crowds. Over their heads boomed the guns firing salutes from cannon ashore and on harbor vessels. Upon reaching the quay, the coffin was met first by the Viceroy, the members of the cathedral chapter (for Bishop Albuquerque was dead now), and the clergy of Goa. Cries of joy, mingling with cries of intercession, filled the bright morning sunshine. On many faces, more quiet than others, tears ran unchecked down brown cheeks. Youthful seminarians watched with something of awe in their bright eyes as the coffin was readied for the procession into the city proper. Children's voices lifted, in high-pitched Oriental singsong measures of the *Benedictus*. Members of the Confraternity of Mercy marched together, every member enjoying a privilege which would be recounted down through succeeding years.

On the shoulders of the Fathers of the college the coffin rode

gently. Its polished sides reflected the darting rays of the sun and it was visible from all sides.

The atmosphere, sacred and impressive, which attends the funeral cortege of dead monarchs was partly present, partly absent. On foot behind the remains walked the Viceroy and high officials of the government, the clergy and the ship captains, and the fortunate ones given places of honor. Behind these crowded the spreading multitudes of the Goanese folk. Yet, withal, there was ever present an undercurrent of feeling more akin to exaltation than to sorrow. All minds rejoiced with pride and all hearts welled with relief that the great apostle's labors were done, that he was finally at rest, and that — so very important — he had come back to his Goa to remain with these people for always.

By the time the cortege reached the church of the Jesuit college, the top of the coffin was covered with the bright fresh flowers, flung from high windows and roof tops. Goa was thrilling with the knowledge that her holy Father had already, by the favor of the good God, worked first miracles. The greatest miracle of all, to be sure, was the incorruptibility of the body. The finger of God was here and there was no hesitancy in doing it reverence.

Ahead of the coffin the orphans of Goa marched in a small, quiet formation. The leader of the group of children carried the veiled crucifix aloft. It was Holy Week, the week so especially consecrated to the Crucified. Nevertheless there was joy and exultation in the ringing of the Goa church bells, hailing the arrival of him whose last earthly gaze had been trained upon the crucifix, held in almost lifeless fingers upon Sancian.

At the College of St. Paul, the body lay in state for three days and nights. On Good Friday the Mass of the Presanctified was chanted by the cathedral canons beside the bier. All through the days and nights of honoring the dead, the wide eyes of countless people gazed upon the exposed and peaceful face of Xavier. The procession of mourners came both day and night, and represented every class of society.

On Holy Saturday morning the High Mass was sung by the Friars Minor at the altar which Francis himself had so often used. During this three-day period, it is related, many miraculous

cures occurred. Most notable was that of Doña Juana Pereira, a relative of Diego. For two months she had been extremely ill with a dangerous ailment. Upon invoking the intercession of Xavier, she was instantly restored to health. Another cure was that of a child, so close to death that the candle given the dying had already been placed in the child's hand.

During the night of Saturday, the priests of the Society placed the body of their Provincial within a sepulcher hollowed out in the sanctuary wall, not far from the high altar. Xavier would rest therein until the new Church of the Bom Jesus was completed.

The Church of the Good Jesus was erected in 1559 by Dom Pedro de Mascarenhas. The nave was large and two transepts went from it, ending in side chapels. These altars were dedicated to Francis Xavier and Francis Borgia. The high altar of the church was dedicated to Ignatius Loyola. Behind the chapel of Xavier, the Grand Duke of Tuscany built the celebrated shrine to the Apostle of the Indies. As early as in 1639, a stone monument was erected over the site of Francis' first burial place, on Sancian, by Portuguese missionaries. Over the same site, in 1700, a chapel was erected by the Jesuit Fathers Turcotti and Laureati. This chapel, falling into ruins when the Society of Jesus was suppressed, was rebuilt by the Bishop of Macao.

In the center of Old Goa still stands the shrine of Xavier, magnet for the world's pilgrims, although the old city has long since been superseded by a new Goa, some twenty minutes away by modern car.

During the pilgrimages to the old city, the faithful leave New Goa and cross the stone bridge above the little Ribendar River. Then on to Old Goa, beyond which the Ghats mountains form a blue-veiled background for what has long since ceased to be known as "The Lisbon of the East." Upon countless occasions, faithful pilgrims have passed the little fishing village nestling near the walls of the old city and passed between the two ancient pillars set in the crumbling wall. From these massive pillars once hung the gates guarding the capital of the far-flung Portuguese empire in the Far East, a city of 200,000 human beings. For many generations, all has been changed. With ancient Goa, as

to all things human, time's long fingers drew ruin and abandonment upon the city, and its peoples went elsewhere.

Collapsing walls with tropical vegetation issuing from their cracked and open spaces, mossy vines crawling unchecked over the ruins of houses, the pall of a dead city worked in wild-growing ferns—such became the once teeming city of Goa.

The moving finger of time, however, has been stayed by the finger of God in one all-important regard. Providence has preserved amid earthly ruins a little touch of heaven in the memorial Church of the Bom Jesus. What was once the city of Goa has become a shrine of the world's affection because it remains in every century "The City of St. Francis."

The last passable street has taken thousands of pilgrims to the *largo*, or Square of St. Francis. There they have gazed at the great memorial church. Beyond the stone-paved approach stands what was once the residence of the professed Jesuits but became the home of the guardian of the shrine. This three-story building forms, with the sacristy of the church, a quadrangle alive with tropical flowers and coconut palms. Following the suppression of the Society of Jesus in Portuguese dominions (1759), the residence has been maintained successively by Italian Vincentians, the Oratorians, and finally by the Patriarch-Archbishop of Goa. A canon of the diocese has been the custodian of the premises, once headquarters of the Jesuit Fathers in India for a hundred and seventy years.

Here, for a year and a half, lived Father Marcellus Mastrilli. The history of his miraculous cure by Xavier, after being struck down in Europe by a falling hammer, and his designation by the saint, appearing to the stricken man in a vision, to initiate the celebrated "Novena of Grace," are well known. So, too, is his extraordinary "calling" to the missions of the Orient. Standing in the little room near the sacristy, reputed to have been Father Mastrilli's, one recalls easily how he stopped, en route to Japan, to supervise the building of the shrine of his brother Jesuit in the Bom Jesus.

Can it be that Francis, himself not favored with the crown of martyrdom, won for Mastrilli that greatest of favors? In any event,

this friend of the Patron of the Missions had hardly set foot in Japan when his martyrdom overtook him. He underwent the horrors of the pit at Unzen near Nagasaki in October, 1637. Four days later he was beheaded for the Faith. He holds high place among the succession of martyrs given to the Church at Nagasaki, that "most Catholic of Japanese cities."

Over the years the Archbishop of Goa, the Governor, and the guardian of the shrine have held simultaneously a key to the shrine. All three keys are necessary for access to the sacred remains.

Imagine that you are beside the great reliquary. Twelve feet above the table of the altar is the heavy sarcophagus, resting on a four-sided marble base. On these sides one sees *bas-relief* pictures of incidents in the saint's life. The sarcophagus itself is decorated in Florentine style and is made of gold, silver, and copper. The whole is exquisitely wrought with inlaid precious stones. The body is clothed in priestly vestments and rests on the metal couch inside the sarcophagus. The couch can be removed at the moment of exposition with its precious burden, the mortal remains of Francis. The metal door at the apostle's feet has three keys.

The official opening of the tomb and public veneration of the body takes place at arranged intervals, that of 1952 — the fourth centenary of Francis' death — being the eighth since 1782. Francis lies in the rich gold vestment provided by the Queen of Spain when the shrine was completed in 1636. During the expositions, pilgrims have been permitted to kiss the soles of the saint's feet. Extreme caution is exercised to prevent pilgrims removing relics. Even so, some pilgrims have managed to take portions of the vestments, and even locks of hair.

Before the exposition of 1952, that of 1922 had been the most impressive. The year marked the three hundredth anniversary of the saint's canonization. Exposition lasted thirty-five days from December 3 to January 7. Five hundred thousand pilgrims came from all over India, and from the whole world, to gather at the apostle's feet. It was the first occasion when women were permitted to kiss the holy feet, and this permission attracted many more

who otherwise might not have decided to come. Two instantaneous cures of Protestant pilgrims were recorded, as well as certain others.

The question most frequently asked is: "In what state of preservation is the body?" Two physicians are always invited to be at hand to examine the body immediately after it is taken from the sarcophagus. Following careful examination behind closed doors in the sacristy, the doctors make their report upon the color and condition of the preservation. They indicate their findings to all present. Thereupon a notary reads from the attested document prepared at the time of the preceding exposition and carefully sealed. It is decided to proceed with the present exposition. The shrine's guardian unlocks the sacristy door. Waiting heralds are given the good news: the body is still incorrupt, the exposition will take place. The heralds race away, the news spreads like growing fire, and pilgrims at the shrine, pilgrims en route to it, and the citizens of New Goa shout aloud the joyous news.

All eight bells of the cathedral peal their jubilation, and the glad harmony resounds from the large throats of other church bell towers. The word is flashed across India to other cities and down through the fisheries and the capes Francis served so well. God still preserves India's treasure. Let all hearts rejoice.

The following morning at eight o'clock, in front of the great altar, the exposition begins. Francis bestows his favors—those healings in the natural order which are secondary to the great torrents of grace which pour into individual human hearts.

Thousands file past and reverently kiss the sacred feet. Eyes alive with curiosity and with reverence study the holy face, the reclining figure of one who seems to rest so calmly, so peacefully in God's own house. Since 1616, one year after the right arm was severed just below the elbow and brought to Rome, a slow process of drying out, of desiccation, has been in progress. The only evident result is found in the parchmentlike texture of the skin and a certain shrinkage in bodily proportions. Today the over-all dimensions are ten inches less than in life.

Thus Francis lies before our eyes, clothed in gold vestments embroidered with pearls. His florid complexion strikes the beholder, as do the slightly parted lips, the distinguishable veins of the

exposed feet. Every sixty or seventy years the vestments crumble and are replaced. Fragments of the former clothing are distributed as relics.

The world is familiar with the high points of the story of Francis after death. Christendom, especially throughout the Orient, was gladdened by Paul V's *Bull of Beatification* in 1610. Both the Catholic and Protestant worlds rejoiced together on the blessed day of March 12, 1622. On that memorable date Francis Xavier and his beloved father in God, Ignatius Loyola, were canonized together.

The father and his eldest son, as it were, were henceforth linked together in unique fashion in the roles of sainthood and in the unceasing memory of the Church. An added, and most understandably fitting, honor was given Francis by a discerning Church when the twentieth century saw him designated world patron of all mission activities: the actual mission endeavors of those laboring on the far-flung outposts, the world-wide army of nontraveling apostles comprising the membership of the Apostleship of Prayer, the world Society of the Propagation of the Faith, which does so much to assist all missionaries in their material needs.

The right arm with the hand that baptized unnumbered thousands in the East was brought to Rome immediately preceding the canonization. The center of the Catholic world believed it only fitting that a great relic should be in its possession. During long years the relic has been treasured in the Jesuit Church of the Gesu in Rome. In the spring of 1949 the relic was brought across the world to have a part in the national Japanese pilgrimage, May 27 to June 12, commemorating Francis' arrival at Kagoshima four hundred years before.

Although the actual date of Francis' arrival was the feast of the Assumption, the Japanese bishops decided to conduct the pilgrimage to the Xavier shrines three months earlier because of better climatic conditions. The high office of the Supreme Command of the Allies in the Pacific offered every co-operation. "I intend to support fully," General Douglas MacArthur said, "this plan for inviting foreign pilgrims to Japan for celebration of this anniversary. And I sincerely hope that a great number will

become interested and make the pilgrimage a great success and an impressive manifestation of the Christian belief."

The story of how tremendously successful the pilgrimage proved to be, the account of the spiritual uplift and reconsecration to the values first preached in the empire by Xavier, these have been well told elsewhere. Never, as the saying went, has anything like it been experienced in Japan. Happiest of all were the Japanese Christians, descendants of Francis Xavier's first converts, the faithful who through martyrdom and perseverance kept the spark of faith alive in Japan, even in centuries when the land was closed to foreign missionaries. Now these Christians had overwhelming cause to rejoice. Their first father in God had returned to them. *El Divino Impaciente* (Francis' well-known title, once translated by some unsung genius as "The Divine Hustler") had come back to his people.

Elsewhere, moreover, the story has been told of the visit made by the relic to the United States during the return journey to Rome. After a visit to the Philippine Islands, the relic was brought to San Francisco. The present writer, then National Director of the Apostleship of Prayer, was designated as priest custodian of the saint's arm, in its gold and glass sealed reliquary, in a swift tour of the United States. Francis himself must have been pleased at the thought of the ease of American air travel, a travel undreamed of in the days of his slow and burdensome journeyings by foot, sea-beaten ships, and Chinese junks.

The American tour covered, with memorable visits and an unprecedented outpouring of hundreds of thousands of Xavier's clients, thirty-one American dioceses within the space of ninety days. When his Eminence, Francis Cardinal Spellman, received the relic into St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York at the beginning of the concluding triduum, the United States, late child of the years, had been given opportunity to pay its loving devours to the saint so familiar to all in the annual Novena of Grace.

There are the usual discrepancies found in biographers' accounts of St. Francis Xavier, differences regarding the actual route followed on a particular journey or the date of a particular event. Most notable, perhaps, is the difference in opinions respecting the actual

date of death of the saint. The Jesuit Fathers Martindale and Harney favor November 27. Another Jesuit, Father Campbell, as well as M. T. Kelly, place the death upon December 2. Maynard, Yeo, and the Jesuit Pius Moore lean to the early hours of December 3. In this opinion they agree with the great record left by the Jesuit historian of Xavier, Father Brou. James Brodrick speaks of his brother Jesuit's death during "the night of December 2."

Such matters can be left to the further study of historians. The concern of these pages has been the extraordinary blessing, bestowed by heaven, upon the work of Francis Xavier. And, in short, upon the contribution made by Ignatius and his first sons, among whom Francis was pre-eminent.

When the founder died in 1556, the Society of Jesus numbered thirteen provinces and nine missions. The growth is remarkable for an Order formally approved by the Holy See only sixteen years before. The *Provincia Goana* (later to be reduced to the Mission of Goa in the turbulent days of the Society's suppression) planted in the Orient the work carried out by this new Church-approved army in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, Sicily, and elsewhere.

Omnia Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam.

All works which pursued the greater glory of God: the salvation of souls; the *Spiritual Exercises*; missions preached to the faithful and the bases of the Faith offered the pagan world; the defense of religion against heretic, schismatic, and apostate; rudiments of the catechism for the very young; and the traditional philosophy and theology for the advanced in studies.

In our day, as in earlier days, zealous missionaries go forth, the Good Companions of their time. They travel afar with the love of Christ in their hearts, His doctrine upon their lips, and the keys of the kingdom swinging at their side.

In all of this enterprise they are sustained by the memory of earlier missionaries. In first rank among these memory-treasured pioneers Francis Xavier forever holds his place. His work, his labor for souls, his eminent life of prayer, his selflessness, his friendly charity and his constant joyousness, his impatience for *more* souls — these are the important elements in the Xavier story which remain.

The matter of miracles, holding too frequently a disproportionate

place in mere human judgment, at times emphasizes what a missionary has done, rather than the more important factor of what he *was*. In Francis Xavier's case, those who wish to do so can consult the evidence, varied and to be carefully winnowed, in the second volume of the *Monumenta Xaveriana*. Some cases are generally acknowledged to be matters of exaggeration. Others are generally agreed upon. Catholic historians are content to echo the words of Brodrick: "His faith, hope, and charity attested God more eloquently than the most stupendous miracle."

Finally, no exaggeration lies in asserting that the story of Xavier is the story of two compelling forces. First, the love of Christ which was instinct in his entire being from the time of the historic conversion in Paris. Second, the fire of zeal which could not rest but ever leaped upward and outward in its consuming quest for souls.

Both elements are unmistakable in the exquisite manifestation of the perfect love of God expressed in the poem *O Deus Ego Amo Te*. This is a Latin version of an old Spanish sonnet which has been attributed, in its Spanish form, to both Ignatius and Xavier. The actual authorship of the original remains unknown.

Whether Francis Xavier authored the poem or not, its expression of the love of God for His own sake is surely characteristic of him. An English adaptation of the poem has been made by Reverend Martin T. Geraghty, S.J. The author of these pages can think of few better ways of concluding the story of Francis Xavier than by reproducing, with the author's permission, these lines:

*O God, I love Thee, love Thee —
Not for eternal yearnings,
Nor yet because who spurn Thee
Shall weep in hell's deep burnings.*

*My poor love to acquire,
Thou suffered torments dire —
The Cross, the nails, the spearing,
The rabble's ribald jeering,
The rack of mind and body —
(My God, sweat-drenched and bloody!)*

*All this . . . and even dying . . .
For me thy love defying.*

*How can I help but love, then,
Confronted by Love broken?*

*Not for my soul's salvation,
Not to escape damnation,
Not for reward's elation,
But with love's compensation,
I love Thee, and will love Thee.*

*The reason for my loving Thee?
My King, my God, Thou lovest me!*

SELECTED READINGS

- Brodrick, James, S.J., *The Progress of the Jesuits* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1947)
- *St. Francis Xavier* (New York: Wicklow Press, 1952)
- Brou, A., S.J., *Saint Francois Xavier*, 2 vols. (Paris: Beauchesne, 1922)
- Campbell, Thos. J., S.J., *The Jesuits*, Vol. I (New York: Encyclopedia Press, 1921)
- Coleridge, James, S.J., *Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*, 2 vols. (London: Burns & Oates, 1872)
- Cunha, V. de Braganca, *Eight Centuries of Portuguese Monarchy* (New York: Pott & Co., 1911)
- Dudon, Paul, S.J., *St. Ignatius of Loyola* (transl. Young) (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1949)
- Harney, Martin, S.J., *The Jesuits In History* (New York: America Press, 1941)
- Hollis, Christopher, *Saint Ignatius* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1931)
- Hughes, Philip, *A Popular History of the Catholic Church* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949)
- Hull, Ernest, S.J., *Hinduism* (in *The History of Religions*, I) (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1910)
- Ignatius, *The Autobiography of St. Ignatius Loyola* (transl.) (New York: Benziger Bros., 1900)
- Joly, Henri, *St. Ignatius of Loyola* (London: Washbourne, Ltd., 1914)
- Kelly, M. T., *A Life of St. Francis Xavier* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1918)
- Laborde, J. E., S.J., *L'Esprit de Saint Francois Xavier* (Paris: Tequi, 1922)
- Livermore, H. V., *A History of Portugal* (Cambridge University Press, 1947)
- Martindale, C. C., S.J., *In God's Army*, Vol. I (New York: Benziger Bros., 1915)

Maynard, Theodore, *The Odyssey of Francis Xavier* (Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1936)

Monumenta Xaveriana, 2 vols. (Madrid, 1900-1912)

Pastor, Ludwig, *History of the Popes* (transl. Kerr, XII) (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1912)

Pise, Charles, *St. Ignatius and His First Companions* (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons)

Yeo, Margaret, *St. Francis Xavier* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1932)

INDEX

- Alba, Duke of, 18
 Albuquerque, Bishop, 190, 191, 250, 270
 Alexander VI, Pope, 12
 Almeida, 218
 Amboina, 166, 170 ff
 Apostleship of Prayer, 287
- Badagas, 149, 251
 Baertz, Gaspard, 182, 193, 252, 254, 266
 Bali, 169
 Barbara, College of St., 27 ff
 Basque, race, 4, 5
 Bassein, 153, 199
 Baztan, area of, 4
 Bernard, Brother, 225 ff, 229
 Bobadilla, Nicholas, 51, 73, 74, 82
 Bonzes, 204, 210, 214, 217, 218, 234, 239, 240, 241
 Borba, 160
 Borneo, 169, 171
 Brahmins, 126, 131, 134, 139, 161
 Bravo, John, 203
 Broet, Paschase, 63, 81, 127, 174
 Buddhism, 214 ff, 237
 Bungo province, 237, 238, 240
Bushido, 211, 214
- Calicut, 106, 144, 162, 192
 Calvin, 42
 Camerino, Paul, 169, 176, 193, 196, 202, 249, 251
 Canary Islands, 191
 Canisius, Peter, 212
 Canton, 206, 245, 268, 269, 271
 Carafa, Cardinal, 69 ff
 Carvalhez, Andrew, 254
 Catherine, Queen, 18
 Celebes, 163, 167, 169, 170
 Ceylon, 149, 150, 157, 185
 Chaliyam, 192
 Charles V, 62, 70, 71, 127, 256
 China, 164, 176, 187, 190, 197, 232, 233, 237, 245
- Cipian, King, 238 ff
 Cochín, 138, 144, 152, 153, 155, 161, 162, 167, 185, 186, 187, 190, 193, 195, 199, 200, 248, 250
 Codure, Jean, 63, 75
 Columbus, Christopher, 191, 212
 Comorin, Cape, 120, 124, 125, 144, 154, 185, 194, 202, 251
 Coulan, 148
 Criminale, Anthony, 160, 166, 176, 181, 188, 202, 251, 252
- da Gama, Edward, 238, 240, 243
 da Gama, Pedro, 201, 261
 da Gama, Vasco, 79, 80, 105, 106, 167, 169
 da Sa, Governor, 189
 da Silva, Governor, 197
 da Silva, Peter, 203, 206, 247
 d'Ataide, Alvaro, 246 ff, 261, 264
 de Albuquerque, Bishop Juan, 108, 109, 145
 de Aravjo, 173
 de Azpilcueta, Doña Maria, 3, 6, 19, 49
 de Borba, Diego, 125, 127
 de Castro, John, 65, 119, 168, 192, 200
 de Foix, Gaston, 17
 d'Eiro, John, 162, 169, 177
 de Noronha, Alonso, 248
 de Paiva, Anthony, 167
 de Souza, Martin, 90, 154, 155
 de Torres, Cosme, 182, 195, 198, 200, 201, 203, 218, 219, 232, 237, 240
 Dominicans, 182
- Enriquez, Francis, 192
 Erasmus, 60, 72, 212
- Faber, Peter, 31, 40, 41, 46, 49, 51, 52, 53, 70, 127, 169, 174, 183, 185, 192
 Ferdinand, King, 6, 191
 Fereira, Alvaro, 257
 Fernandes, Brother Juan, 182, 200, 203,

- 214, 217, 219, 221, 225, 230, 235, 237, 240
 Firando, 232
 Francis I, 62
 Fuentarabbia, 24
 Funai, 237
- Gago, Balthazar, 257
 Geraghty, Martin, S.J., 289
 Goa, 97, 102, 104 ff
 Gomes, Antonio, 182, 183, 193, 196, 201, 202, 236, 238, 249
 Govea, Diego, 42 ff, 80
 Granada, fall of, 16
 Guinea, New, 170
- Henry VIII, 25, 34
 Hindustan, 204
 Hirado, 217, 218, 219, 230
 Holy League, 18
 Honshu, 213
- Ignatius, St., approval of Institute, 77; canonization, 286; conversion, 35 ff; dealing with Gomes, 254; death, 288; direction of men, 127; elected general, 127; first vows, 54; to Holy Land, 40; at Montserrat, 37; ordination, 71; relations with Govea, 42 ff; to Rome, 71 ff; sends Xavier to missions, 83; to Spain, 1535, 61; at Venice, 64 ff; wounded, 8, 21; with Xavier in Paris, 33 ff
 Iniguists, 67
 Isabella, Queen, 5, 191
- Jafnapatam, 150, 152, 154, 157, 158
 Japan, 164, 176, 182, 183, 184, 187, 190, 194, 195, 196, 197
 Java, 164, 169
 John III, King, 79, 80, 81, 87, 88, 89, 90, 119, 155, 188, 189, 190, 192, 202, 256
 Juan, Lord of Xavier, 5
 Julius II, Pope, 16
 Julius III, Pope, 259
- Kagoshima, 207, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218
 Kandy, 190
 Kyoto, 211, 213, 224, 225, 226, 230, 234
 Kyushu, 235, 238
- Lancilotti, 181, 182, 202
 Laynez, Diego, 51, 70, 71, 75
 Le Jay, Claude, 63
 Leo X, Pope, 21, 72
Letter On Obedience, 59
Litterae Indicae, 199
 Louis XII, of France, 17
 Luther, Martin, 12, 20, 26, 34, 39, 58, 59, 71, 72, 212
- MacArthur, Douglas, 286
 Macassar, 169
 Madalena, 5
 Malabar, 106, 129
 Malacca, 124, 153, 160, 161, 163, 164, 166, 168, 180, 183, 185, 195, 196, 197, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 205, 206, 216, 246, 247, 256, 259, 260, 261, 272
 Malaya, 165, 166, 194, 208
 Manar, 149, 150, 188
 Manresa Cave, 38
 Mansilhas, Francis, 90, 95, 101, 138, 141, 145, 150, 162, 167, 193
 Marranos, 87
 Mastrilli, Marcellus, 283
 Meliapur, 159, 162, 255
 Mercy, Confraternity, 249 ff
 Moluccas, 160, 169, 170, 175, 179, 193, 199, 200, 252, 265
 Montaign College, 41
 Montmartre, 54
 More, Thomas, 212
 Moretai, 176
 Moro Islands, 176, 177
 Moslems, 108, 175, 180, 189, 252
 Mozambique, 98, 100, 101, 105, 160
- Nadal, Jerome, 51, 169
 Nagasaki, 284
 Navarre, 4, 6
 Navarrese, origin, 5
 Negapatam, 150, 159, 162
 Ninjit, 214
- O Deus Ego Amo Te*, 289
 Ormuz, 193, 252
 Ortiz, 66
 Oxindono, Prince, 234, 236, 240
- Pampeluna, 7, 8
 Paravas, 114, 126, 129, 149
 Paul, College of St., 190, 252, 257, 281

Paul, Micer, 90, 95, 101, 127, 138
 Paul III, Pope, 69 ff, 77, 81, 87, 259
 Paul V, Pope, 286
 Peking, 269, 271
 Pereira, Diego, 244 ff
 Perez, 200, 246, 266, 269
 Philip, of Austria, 16
 Pius XI, Pope, 38
 Polo, Marco, 199

Regimini Ecclesiae Militantis, 77
 Renaissance, 84
 Ribadeneira, 71, 127
 Ricci, Matteo, 260
 Rodriguez, Simon, 46, 49, 74, 75, 80,
 82, 86, 88, 89, 157, 160, 174, 191, 193,
 195, 196, 197, 200, 202, 251, 256

Sakai, 226
 Salmerón, Alfonso, 51, 75
 Sancian, 244, 245, 264
 Sanguessa, 13
 Santa Fe, college, 125, 126, 144
 Satsuma, prince of, 207 ff
 Singapore, straits, 266
 Society of Jesus, in Brazil, 213; con-
 firmation, 72; constitutions, 60, 72,
 76, 77, 79, 127; early colleges, 142;
 first vows, 55; growth, 72, 260, 288;
 growth in East, 199; suppression, 283
 Socotra, 189
 Spice Islands, 165, 172, 176, 179, 202
Spiritual Exercises, 34, 38, 39, 55, 57,
 58, 65, 88, 100, 126, 128, 203, 288
 Sumatra, 171

Tamil, 208
 Ternate, 175, 178
 Tetzels, John, 20
 Travancore, 146, 147, 154, 185, 192
 Trent, Council of, 60, 259
 Tuticorin, 162
 Valignani, Allesandro, 219
 Vaz, Miguel, 125, 155, 156, 158, 190, 192
 Velho, 269

Xavier, castle of, 4
 Xavier, Francis, ancestry, 7; athletic
 skill, 24; beatification, 286; birth,
 earliest years, 3 ff; in Bologna, 73 ff;
 boyhood, 11 ff; canonization, 286;
 chosen for missions, 83; collapse of
 family fortunes, 16; at Comorin,
 125 ff; conversion by Ignatius, 44 ff;
 correspondence with Ignatius, 186 ff;
 dismissal of Gomes, 253 ff; exposition
 of body, 284 ff; family devotions, 13;
 first burial, 276; first vows, 54; at
 Goa, 104 ff; with Ignatius in Paris,
 40 ff; journey to Rome, 68; in Kyoto,
 228 ff; labors in Yamaguchi, 220 ff;
 last days, 271 ff; last days in India,
 248 ff; leaves Paris, 62; letter-writer,
 152 ff; loss of estate, 18; makes
 Exercises, 52; to Malacca and Moluc-
 cas, 161 ff; at Meliapur, 159; mission
 to Japan, 199 ff; as missionary, 136 ff;
 in Moluccas, 169; with Moslems,
 108 ff; opinion regarding Japanese,
 224, 231; opposition in Malacca,
 261 ff; ordination, 71; preparation for
 Chinese mission, 254 ff; Provincial of
 Indies, 238; relic to Japan, Philip-
 pine Islands, United States, 286 ff;
 religious profession, 145; return to
 Cochin, Baticala, Ribendar, Goa,
 279 ff; return to Malacca, second
 burial, 277 ff; return to Venice, 70;
 in Rome, 69 ff; sails for East, 91 ff;
 at Sancian, 267 ff; stay in Lisbon,
 86 ff; studies in Paris, 22 ff; third
 burial, 282; at Venice, 63 ff; visits
 Travancore, 146
 Xavier, Juan, 10
 Xavier, Madalena, 47, 52
 Ximenes, Cardinal, 19, 20, 23

Yajiro, Paul, 183, 184, 194, 200, 203,
 204, 207, 208, 209, 214, 216, 217, 218
 Yamaguchi, 217, 219, 230, 233, 234,
 235, 240
 Yoshitaka, Prince, 222

Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries



1 1012 01218 3473

POPE JOHN MEMORIAL LIBRARY
CHRIST THE KING
HADDONFIELD, N. J.

DATE: _____

~~T. O. S.
OF
CHRIST THE KING CHURCH
HADDONFIELD, NEW JERSEY~~

~~St. Joseph's~~
~~CATHOLIC ACTION~~
~~LIBRARY~~
~~HIGH BRIDGE, N. J.~~



~~St. Joseph's~~
~~CATHOLIC ACTION~~
~~LIBRARY~~
~~HIGH BRIDGE, N. J.~~

~~T.O.S.~~
~~CHRIST THE KING CHURCH~~
~~HADDONFIELD, NEW JERSEY~~

